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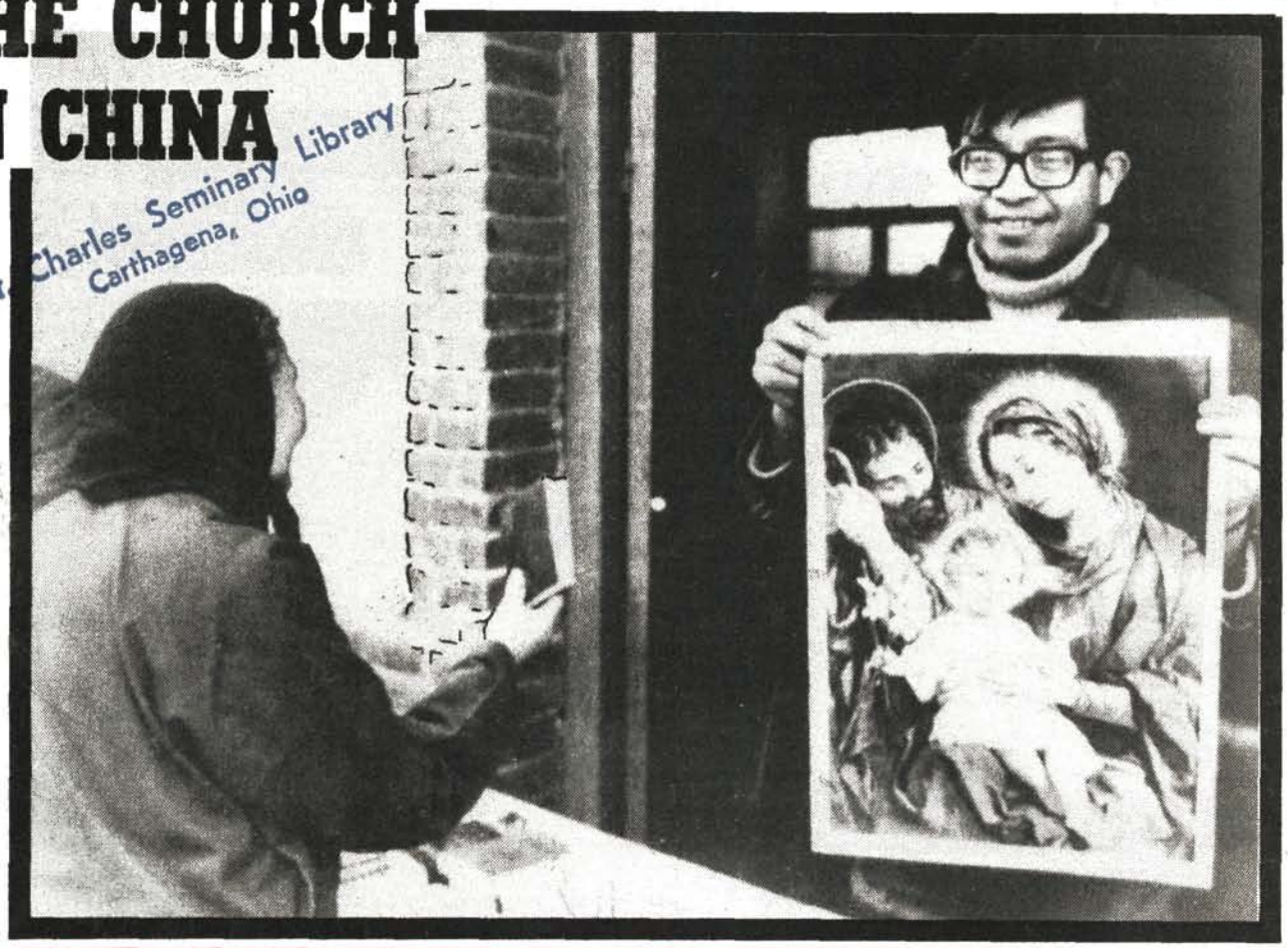

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John Garvey Flight 007 **Peadar Kirby** Ireland & abortion

The Editors Begin's legacy

John C. Cort Christian socialists

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Correspondence

Israel's parties

Brookline, Mass.

To the Editors: Congratulations are in order for Professor Alan Dowty on his insightful article on religious influence in Israel [July 15].

I would like to add two observations of my own:

First, while the (ultra-religious) Agudath Israel might not officially proclaim ideological solidarity with the secular nationalist Zionist groups, certainly many of its members share a fervent desire for Israel's continued ownership of Judea and Samaria, part of Eretz Yisroel — the Land of Israel. (This undoubtedly holds true for members of the National Religious Party also, which accounts for the shift in votes from the NRP to the Likud.)

Second, with respect to the effect that the "linkage between religion and nationalism" will have on Israel's foreign policy decisions, it should be apparent that this will further attract Israel to the Western democracies and to the United States in particular. The anti-religious Communist countries of the world hold no appeal for religiously observant Jews.

C. STEPHEN BRESSLER

'Religious imperialism'

New York, N.Y.

To the Editors: In his review of *The Myth of the Great Secret* [July 15] William McNamara displays toward Buddhism the classic attitudes of religious imperialism. He claims that it is "almost impossible for Americans to import Oriental spirituality." How does he then recommend a "Christ-centered, worldwide revolution?" Would it not be equally impossible for Orientals to import Western Christianity? The problem, as he accurately describes it, is the nature of the false and craving ego. The transformation of Buddhism into "Buddyism" simply shows, as the transformation of Christianity into the Inquisition or the Moral Majority, the lengths to which the ego will go in self-preservation. Christianity traditionally sees this phenomenon as a result of original sin. It is no argument for the inherent superiority of Christianity.

Father McNamara wants us to compare the trivialization of Buddhism with the pure essence of "mystical" Christianity. A more pertinent comparison would place the spread of Buddhism throughout the world by peaceful persuasion alongside Christianity's record of persecutions and conversion by the sword.

McNamara speaks of people who in turning East have lost their balance and ended up "with deracinated minds and deciduous hearts." Is he going to overlook the fact that Christianity is responsible for the hatred of Jews, pathological fear of women, intolerance for opponents, masochistic glorification of suffering and alienation from the body exhibited in the lives, not of those "twisted by dark clouds of Jansenism and gnosticism" but of the church's greatest saints and teachers; Paul, Jerome, Augustine, John the Golden-mouthed, Dominic and even that most Buddhist of saints, Francis of Assisi, demonstrate some or all of these characteristics. Are we to assume that it was impossible for *them* to import "mystical" Christianity, pure and undefiled?

The prophet Jesus told his followers to make a "turning" of repentance. We Christians have simply refused to repent of the authoritarianism, lust for temporal power and prestige and exclusive claims to the truth which have characterized our religion from its earliest days. Even after Auschwitz the Vatican Council II was not able to issue a statement of Christian repentance, but only a mild censure of anti-Semitism as something other people did. Is it not time for Christians to abandon claims to "the Way," mystical or otherwise, and join the worldwide religious community on an equal footing? Christians have much more to learn from Buddhism about compassion, tolerance and understanding than Father McNamara would lead us to believe.

JOHN KLOPACZ

An atomic war

Vienna, Va.

To the Editors: William Lanouette's review of Sam McCracken's book, *The War Against the Atom*, reveals his misunderstanding of the technical facts surrounding this complex subject [May 6]. Furthermore, Mr. Lanouette in his review is guilty of the faults he ascribes to Mr. McCracken; i.e., of "minimizing," "simplifying," being "loose with facts," and using "ad hominem" arguments. While he acknowledges the fact that Mr. McCracken's purpose is to state the case "for nuclear energy," Mr. Lanouette is clearly disturbed that he does so. (In reviewing five books, Mr. Lanouette devotes fifty percent of his space to this one book.)

As a physicist involved in this debate, I have carefully scrutinized Mr. McCracken's book for errors. It is clear that while there are some minor errors (none of which Mr. Lanouette identified), the presentation of the facts is accurate and fair. Indeed, the sections of the book which cover the people in the debate, a topic which tempts most writers on nuclear topics, both pro and con, to lapse into ad hominem argumentation, are remarkable for the care with which Mr. McCracken addresses only technical claims, not motives or personalities. Admittedly, Mr. McCracken dissects

(Continued on page 542)

Commonweal welcomes letters on subjects treated in its pages. Letters of not more than 250 or 300 words naturally have a better chance of being published.

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WHAT BEGIN LEAVES BEHIND

WORRIED ABOUT his declining health, depressed since the death of his wife last fall, deeply concerned by the quagmire he got Israel into in Lebanon, Menachem Begin said simply: 'I cannot go on any longer.'' Even his most severe critics must feel compassion for an aged man who has reached the end of his rope. Yet that compassion should not prevent a realistic judgment on Mr. Begin's legacy for his country.

After Anwar Sadat made his historic pilgrimage to Jerusalem, Mr. Begin negotiated peace with Egypt and later shared the Nobel Peace prize for his efforts. But in Lebanon, Israel under his leadership for the first time fought a war of choice rather than necessity. It was a war with several ambitious objectives: to destroy the Palestinians as a potent force, eliminate Syrian forces from Lebanon, and create a stable, pro-Israeli government able to maintain order within its borders and to sign a peace treaty with Israel. Instead, the Israelis are caught in a situation from which they cannot escape. The Syrians, rearmed by the Russians, are stronger than ever. Civil war, while not new in Lebanon, became fiercer, and there is less and less chance that the government there will be able to police its own territory, let alone guard Israel's borders. True, the Palestinians were dealt a heavy blow, and have themselves damaged their own cause even more since then, but no one can imagine that this will make the Palestinian problem disappear. And Israeli losses were far heavier than had been anticipated, the equivalent in Israel's population of almost 200,000 American casualties, and they continue to mount. The pressure inside Israel on Begin to resign was significant.

Almost unnoticed by the outside world while all this was going on was Israel's financial plight under the Begin regime. Israel's balance of payments this year is projected at close to $5 billion — a horrendous sum for such a small country. The nation's total indebtedness has soared under Mr. Begin, reaching almost $21 billion, which makes the debt the highest per capita indebtedness in the world. Inflation is incredibly high, and it is unlikely to get better unless Mr. Begin's successor takes stringent measures that Begin himself was unwilling to undertake. The economic mess, it should be noted, developed despite U.S. help; Israel now receives more U.S. foreign aid, under more generous terms, than any other country in the world. Nonetheless, Mr. Begin's successor will almost certainly have to ask for a substantial increase in assistance from the U.S.

All this may be true, say Mr. Begin's supporters, but no one can deny his historic accomplishment: he has vastly extended the land of Israel, almost certainly making the borders of the nation reach from the Jordan to the sea. With King Hussein and the Palestinians unwilling to bargain in terms of President Reagan's peace plan and with Israeli land takeovers and settlements proceeding apace, the West Bank is close to having been annexed. It is hard to see how the process can now be blocked, given

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Jordanian and Palestinian shortsightedness. But as thousands of Israeli citizens who oppose Mr. Begin's policies ask, is this de facto annexation really to Israel's long-term advantage? The dilemma posed by the takeover of the West Bank has often been pointed out: if the Arab inhabitants of the annexed territory are refused citizenship, Israel becomes a Mideastern South Africa. If citizenship is granted to that many additional Arabs, they will in the foreseeable future outnumber the Jews and vote the Jewish state out of existence. This, of course, unless the Palestinian residents are driven out, as the architect of the Lebanon war, Ariel Sharon, would probably like to do. But such a course would surely mean condemnation by a united world opinion, and can Israel stand that? Mr. Begin may have enlarged Israel's borders, but he has at the same time left a well nigh insoluble problem.

Not that Menachem Begin's likely successor, Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir, is much inclined to see the situation on the West Bank as a problem. Mr. Shamir is a Begin political clone without Begin's charisma, and he can be counted on to continue Mr. Begin's policies, only more so: Shamir was, for example, opposed to the peace treaty with Egypt.

Where does all this leave the United States? For all his good intentions, President Reagan's Mideast peace plan is dead in the water. On that we have reached an impasse, and it is unlikely that we can come up with any other creative undertaking at this point. As is obvious by the daily papers, the 1984 presidential campaign is already well under way, and a truism of American politics is that no significant initiative in the Middle East can develop during a presidential campaign. Democratic candidate John Glenn said recently that the U.S. should abandon what he called its evenhandedness in the Middle East and give Israel our unequivocal support. With few Palestinians around to argue the point, that, we suspect, is about the level and complexity that discussion of the Middle East will achieve in this country until the presidential election is behind us.

HUNGER PAINS (CONT.)

A month ago we noted the report that President Reagan was "perplexed" at talk about widespread hunger in America, and we expressed the hope that the task force Mr. Reagan was appointing to study this issue would be more than another gesture in the president's assiduous campaign of image-building.

Well, here's what has happened. Mr. Reagan named his task force. The assignment he gave it never mentions the word "hunger" or the need to determine how widespread hunger is. Instead, the task force is mandated to "analyze federal and other programs intended to render food assistance to the needy and . . . make recommendations . . . how such programs may be improved."

On the face of it, anyway, that is hardly a job for a special presidential study group. As Nancy Amidei, director of the Food Research and Action Center, observed, "That's what the people who work at the U.S. Department of Agriculture are paid to do. If they aren't doing their jobs, a ninety-day task force won't be able to do it for them." In fact, another presidential panel just finished evaluating the food assistance programs. That was the President's Private Sector Survey on Cost Control, a business-dominated operation headed by industrialist J. Peter Grace. That committee recommended slashing a few more billions from food assistance programs. Ms. Amidei's group, along with the National Anti-Hunger Coalition, charged in court that the Grace committee had not complied with the standards of balance set forth in the Federal Advisory Committee Act, and last July a U.S. District Court judge agreed, finding that the committee had acted in violation of federal law.

Of course, the new task force could be different. Despite a formal charge that avoids all hint of a hunger problem, any process of analyzing and improving the food assistance programs could logically lead to a careful examination of the needs that, so far, have been attested by the U.S. Conference of Mayors, the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, church groups and food banks around the nation, reports collected by the Government Accounting Office, newspaper and TV stories, and legislators like Democratic Congressman Leon Panetta and Republican Senator Mark Andrews who have overseen congressional hearings. A lot will depend on the independence, knowledgeability, and sensitivity of the task force members.

So consider the president's appointments. There's J.P. Bolduc for one, a senior vice-president at the Grace corporation and the chief operating officer for the aforementioned Grace committee on cost control. Then there's Kenneth W. Clarkson, an economist who worked at the Office of Management and Budget when OMB was designing cuts in food stamps. In a 1975 book, Clarkson declared that food stamps could be abolished and, considering alternatives, drew attention to the merits of a diet, first proposed in 1944, of spinach, cabbage, pancake flour, and pork liver. Also on the task force are former Massachusetts governor, Edward J. King, known as "Mr. Reagan's favorite Democrat" for his conservative views on governmental responsibility, and George Gordon Graham, one of the few pediatricians to have testified against the Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). Of the other task force members only two have had direct involvement in the hunger issue: Betsy Brian Rollins runs a Durham, North Carolina, soup kitchen; and John Douglas Driggs chairs a national network of food banks. Driggs, a former mayor of Phoenix, is one of the several millionaires on the task force. If the task force is short on individuals with direct experience of food programs, it has room for several ideological sharpshooters who are likely to put a heavy burden of proof on anyone claiming cause for more federal effort in feeding low-income citizens.

The hunger this task force seems most calculated to serve is the administration's hunger for a better image. Ever since the president insisted that an across-the-board tax cut for rich and poor alike was perfectly fair, even while David Stockman was recognizing this as a "Trojan horse" which hid a significant

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shift of the tax burden off the shoulders of the well-off, the administration's defenders have been trying to counter charges of unfairness with one set of figures after another. In regard to food stamps, the latest argument has been to point to overall increases since 1980 in the budget for food stamps as well as in the number of people receiving them. The figures are slippery, beginning with the choice of 1980 as a baseline rather than the last Carter budget (1981) and skirting the fact that these numbers would be different had the president actually succeeded in obtaining the cuts he requested. But the real reason for these increases—when they are increases—is simply that unemployment and growing poverty in the Reagan years have enlarged the numbers of eligible citizens seeking aid. Thus in 1981, for every 100 people with incomes below 125 percent of the poverty line, there were between 52 and 53 people receiving food stamps. In 1982, for every 100 people below 125 percent of the poverty line, there were only 48 getting food stamps. But—and here's what makes the administration's figures look passable—in 1982 there were an additional three million people who fell below 125 percent of the poverty line. If the absolute totals of recipients or spending still have not fallen, credit is owed not to the administration's fairness but to a slightly recalcitrant Congress and, above all, to the recession.

There is a lot of room for improvement in the nation's food assistance programs—improvement in the direction of getting aid to many who are not now receiving it as well as in husbanding resources without waste. If the new task force were beginning its work as free of biases as it apparently is of knowledge and experience, we would be more sanguine about its likely contribution. As it is, we'd like to be surprised.

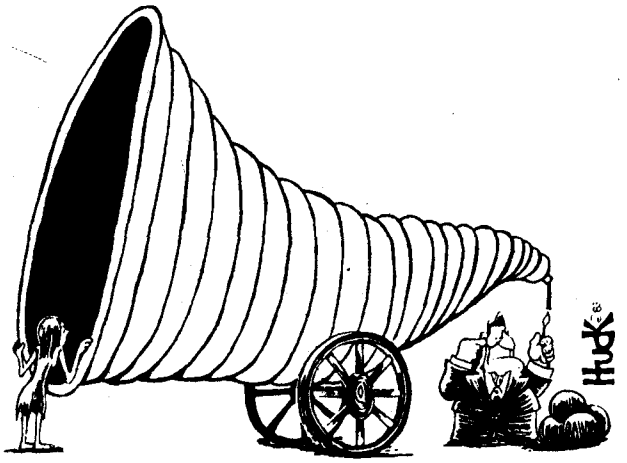
Report from Ireland

A PYRRHIC VICTORY

DISARRAY OVER ABORTION

ON SEPT. 7, the Irish electorate voted to include in the constitution a clause recognizing the equal right to life of the unborn child and its mother. The new clause provides a way of giving constitutional backing to the already existing legal ban on abortion. Although the measure passed by a two-to-one majority, the victory was nonetheless greeted with little rejoicing. True, Mr. Oliver J. Flanagan, a conservative member of parliament for the governing Fine Gael party and member of a secretive, elitist Catholic organization, the Knights of Columbanus, called on the government to declare the day a public holiday as "the liberation day of the unborn." Nonetheless, most politicians only heaved a sigh of relief that the campaign was over.

The proposal was first introduced by a lobby of senior doctors in April 1981 and quickly accepted by the leaders of the two main political parties. Since then it has generated deep



bitterness and divisions throughout Irish life. On the surface the campaign was about ways to prevent the liberalization of abortion laws in the Republic. In fact it quickly turned into a national debate about the liberalization of society, focusing as never before on the single most emotive issue in Irish life: are we to become a liberal pluralist society or to remain dominated by a narrow Catholic ethos?

Abortion itself never really became an issue since both sides constantly reiterated their total opposition to it. This was despite constant attempts by the pro-amendment campaign (the Pro-Life Amendment Campaign, PLAC, as they called themselves) and a number of Catholic bishops to insist that the campaign against the amendment was being manipulated by pro-abortion groups.

As the campaign proceeded, there was a growing public perception of the proponents and more active supporters of the amendment proposal as representing a conservative and triumphalistic Catholicism which at times resorted to crude intimidatory tactics. It was this perception which mobilized the support of many leading figures in Irish life for the anti-amendment campaign. Statements such as that of the same Oliver J. Flanagan that victory for the amendment would put an end to "liberal intellectuals" once and for all, and tactics of PLAC such as their allegation that they possessed proof the government was considering proposals to allow the abortion of handicapped fetuses, frightened many into active opposition. The deputy prime minister and leader of the Labor party, Mr. Dick Spring, put his finger on widely felt fears about the proposal when he asked in a public statement: "Is it possible that this campaign represents no more than a backlash against the slow liberalizing of our society?"

In the context of attempts to interest Northern Ireland Protestants in eventual reunification with the Republic, undoubtedly the most significant division to emerge from early on in the campaign was a confessional one. For the first time on any issue since the foundation of the state all the Protestant churches actively opposed the amendment while the Catholic church just as actively supported it, even to the extent that many pulpits were used to urge a "yes" vote.

Not only did Protestant churches see as a distinctively Catholic view the recognition of the right to life of the unborn as being equal to that of the mother, but they all rejected the stated

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reason for an amendment, which was to make it more difficult for either the legislature or the judiciary to change the abortion laws.To them it smacked of a moral authoritarianism which has bedeviled life in the Republic. Thus they repeatedly charged that the amendment was sectarian and would further confirm the widespread Protestant view in Northern Ireland that the Republic is a sectarian Catholic state.

Such a charge was simply dismissed as groundless by the pro-amendment lobby and Catholic church spokesmen but for representatives of the minority churches it remained real. "We have not been listened to," said a leading Church of Ireland (Anglican) theologian as the results came in. Commenting on the final vote, the extremist Protestant leader in Northern Ireland, the Rev. Ian Paisley, for once echoed the widespread fears of Protestants throughout the island when he said that it guaranteed the strengthening of the sectarian nature of Irish society.

But in the most decisive way that has yet happened in the Republic this campaign also showed just how widely this conservative Catholic ethos is being rejected. Doctors and lawyers, preferring to make up their own minds rather than be overly influenced by the bishops, bitterly confronted each other in public for the first time ever. Throughout the country ordinary doctors and lawyers came out on either side, forming groups to lobby for or against.

On both the medical and legal levels the issues raised were extremely serious. Senior doctors fought with each other as to whether this amendment would have the effect of preventing operations currently carried out to save the life of a pregnant woman which might lead to the death of the fetus. Many eminent lawyers, including the attorney general and the government's Director of Public Prosecutions, expressed fears that the wording might be interpreted by the Supreme Court either to liberalize the present abortion law or, on the other hand, to prohibit operations currently carried out. In no way, they stressed, could it be guaranteed that the current situation would not be changed by the amendment, as PLAC continuously claimed.

But the bitter divisions went far deeper than just the professions most immediately concerned. The country's main farming organization, the Irish Farmers Association, suspended its president and eleven executive officers for two months after they had come out publicly against the amendment. For the first time ever people walked out of Sunday Mass in Catholic churches throughout the country in protest both at episcopal pastoral letters urging a "yes" vote and at preaching, often exaggerated and simplistic, seeing the issue as a new "battle of Lepanto," as one preacher put it.

Trade unionists, teachers, publishers, musicians, even gays, all set up groups against the amendment. Many of the country's leading musicians played free of charge at concerts to publicize the anti-amendment position while leading artists donated paintings to raise funds for the campaign.

For the first time in decades it appeared that an issue had arisen which touched deep nerve ends in the Irish consciousness. While many people remained confused, caught between the claims and counterclaims of both sides, leading figures waded into the debate often with more passion than reason.

To help in their campaign PLAC brought over two U.S. Congressmen, Mr. Henry Hyde and Mr. Christopher Smith, as well as a former Congressman, Mr. Robert Dornan of California. Furthermore the pro-amendment lobby were helped financially by such groups as Father Paul Marx's Human Life International and American Life Lobby, both based in Washington, D.C.

Charges that the anti-amendment campaign was receiving substantial funds from the International Planned Parenthood Federation in New York were denied by that organization. However, plans by PLAC to host a speaking tour of the country by the well-known British broadcaster, Malcolm Muggeridge, who recently became a Catholic, backfired when Mr. Muggeridge read the wording of the proposed amendment and concluded it could lead to abortion being legalized rather than prevent it.

So deep did the passions go that they even divided the two governing political parties, Fine Gael and the Labor party. While parliamentary members of the former agreed that the party would urge a "no" vote but not campaign, a handful of prominent members actively campaigned on opposing sides. The Labor party, though campaigning against, also had many prominent members opposing the party line. Only Fianna Fail, the country's largest party though now in opposition, managed to maintain a strict discipline, urging a "yes" vote but with no prominent members taking any part in the campaign. It was almost as if the party did not exist as Irish society tore itself apart.

Controversy surrounds the role of the present Taoiseach

Wording of the clause now included in the Irish constitution:

"The State acknowledges the right to life of the unborn and, with due regard to the equal right of life of the mother, guarantees in its laws to respect, and, as far as practicable, by its laws to defend and vindicate that right."

The vote nation-wide

	Returns	*Percent of those voting*	*Percent of the electorate*
Yes:	841,233	66.45%	35.79%
No :	416,136	32.87%	17.6%

The vote in Dublin

	Returns	*Percent of those voting*
Yes:	191,883	51.36%
No :	179,665	48.09%

Voter turnout: 53.67 percent of the electorate.

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(Prime Minister) and Fine Gael leader, Dr. Garret FitzGerald, for his about-turn on the issue. As late as last November's general election he unconditionally accepted the proposal, even promising a referendum by March 31 if elected. However, in the early months of this year he began to see the whole proposal as being in contradiction to the much publicized "constitutional crusade" he launched at the end of 1981 to delete sectarian Catholic elements from the state's constitution as a way of wooing Northern Protestants.

From his pained soul-searching at the time he concluded that the amendment could lead to the death of women "whose lives are now saved in all hospitals in accordance with universal medical practice." This gave the anti-amendment campaign its most successful slogan: "This amendment could kill women." While silent during the most bitter period of the campaign he did issue a statement on the eve of the vote in which he said that his "duty as a Christian, concerned above all with the protection of human life, from the start, and concerned with peace and reconciliation on this island, is to vote against this wording."

Ultimately what makes this referendum campaign so significant is seen in the fact that this was the first time an Irish Prime Minister openly disagreed with the firm recommendation of the Catholic hierarchy on an issue touching on sexual morality. Any comfort taken by conservatives that they have stopped the tide of liberalization is bound to be short lived. While a two-to-one majority carried this amendment, the turnout was only just over fifty percent, extremely low by Irish standards more used to seventy-plus percent of the electorate voting. The vote also showed a significantly higher "no" vote in urban areas and among the young.

Moreover, a significant lobby pushing for liberalization of Irish life has mobilized on this issue as never happened before. They have already said that they see this campaign as only a beginning. But perhaps most importantly the whole debate has forced ordinary people to face an extremely complex moral issue rather than resort to church authority to make their moral decisions for them.

Paradoxically, while attitudes on abortion may have changed little, what is certain is that attitudes on subjects like contraception and divorce have liberalized to a degree unimaginable even five years ago. An opinion poll published on the eve of the vote which accurately predicted a two-to-one majority in favor of the amendment also reported a two-to-one majority in favor of divorce, at present constitutionally prohibited. Dr. FitzGerald may well seek now to reestablish his liberal credentials by moving on these issues.

This whole sorry episode in our national life has served to bring out of the woodwork some of the latent forces operative in Irish society, and many have been shocked by seeing them in the open. The historians may well judge it, to use the words of a lecturer in philosophy and a committed Catholic, "as whistling up a last final salute to traditional Catholicism."

PEADAR KIRBY

(Peadar Kirby, a previous contributor, is an Irish journalist who lives in Dublin.)

World Congress in Sweden

CHRISTIAN SOCIALISTS

SOLIDARITY, BUT NO 'SOLIDARITY'

THE SETTING was what one delegate described as "a secular heaven on earth temporarily occupied by Christians." It was Bommersvik, a training center of the Social Democratic Youth of Sweden, thirty miles south of Stockholm in a beautiful country that socialists have governed for forty-six of the last fifty-one years, with commendable results.

The occasion was the first world congress of Christian socialists, fifty-five delegates from twenty-seven countries and five continents. For over fifty years there had been a loose federation of Christian socialist organizations, mainly from the Protestant countries of northern Europe. Now there was a coming together of religious socialists from both Catholic, Protestant, and ecumenical organizations on all the major continents.

The delegates included freedom fighters from South Africa, a cabinet member from Nicaragua (Minister of Education Carlos Tünnerman), the postmaster general of Sweden, a Japanese theologian from New York, an American priest living in London and speaking for Christian socialists in Chile and Peru, a Melkite Catholic headmaster from Galilee in Israel.

If there was a predominant theme, motive, or spirit of the congress, it was the desire of Christian socialists to reach out to each other and to express their common faith and their mutual support and dependence. In particular there was the eagerness of Northern and Western socialists to identify with the struggles of Africans and Latin Americans for liberation from murderous and oppressive regimes.

Unfortunately, there were no representatives of Solidarity in Poland. They had not been invited. Most probably they would not have been able to attend if they had. More understandably, there were no delegates from Afghanistan. Therefore, when an effort was later made to match criticism of the United States for its intervention in Latin America with criticism of the Soviet Union for its invasion of Afghanistan and criticism of the pro-Soviet rulers of Poland for their suppression of the right of free trade unionism, there was no one who could speak with the same passion as the delegates from South Africa and Nicaragua.

"You don't bite the hand that feeds you." This was never said, but it is the most plausible explanation of the intense reluctance with which these delegates from movements enjoying Soviet support reacted to the effort to criticize injustice and oppression wherever they might occur. And the European delegates, most of them, were also reluctant, in the interests of another kind of solidarity, to force the issue. So the congress's

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final statement, arrived at by consensus, did not mention Afghanistan or Poland, although it did include support of the Albufeira Manifesto of the Socialist International, which does criticize Soviet misdeeds in Afghanistan and Poland and, in fact, the whole "Communist economic and social system."

Such are the ambiguities of international cooperation among Christian socialists in the year 1983. On the following subjects, however, there was no ambiguity or disagreement.

- *Central America:* "We support the initiatives of the Contadora Group [Mexico, Panama, Venezuela, and Colombia] for achieving peace in the region through discussion and dialogue."
- *Nicaragua:* "We identify with and support the peace proposal of the Nicaraguan government, including (a) the immediate signing of a non-aggression pact between Nicaragua and Honduras, (b) the immediate cessation of all military support from any nations to those involved in the Central American conflict, (c) absolute respect for the self-determination of the nations involved, and (d) no installation of foreign military bases in Central America and the suspension of military exercises" by foreign powers.
- *South Africa:* "We ask churches and socialist movements to work for economic sanctions against South Africa . . . and to give material support to the national liberation movements, SWAPO in Namibia and the African National Congress in South Africa."
- *Peace and employment:* "Weapons kill even before they are fired. . . . Only disarmament can set free the resources desperately needed to prevent millions of people from starving, to create and maintain full and meaningful employment, to finance education, health, welfare, and construction projects which in turn will provide work for many people."
- *A pluralist economy:* "We commit ourselves to democratic socialism. That is the goal of a pluralist economy and society with a controlled distribution of power over the process of production and distribution by means of a maximum degree of democratic participation at all levels." The implications of this statement are clearly antipathetic to Leninist regimes.
- *Commitment to the poor:* "It is our religious conviction that Jesus Christ is with those who are poor, disadvantaged, tortured, and forgotten. He was born outside the wealthy cities of his time and it was outside the political and economic centers of his country that he was crucified. We believe that God is present in those liberation movements that are helping oppressed people to achieve freedom and human dignity. As Christian socialists committed to peace and justice we make this statement as a testimony of our political conviction and our religious faith."

The delegates from the U.S. represented the Religion and Socialism Committee of the Democratic Socialists of America. Despite their concern over the ambiguous posture on Afghanistan and Poland, they announced that they would recommend permanent affiliation with the International League of Religious Socialists, the core organization behind the congress.

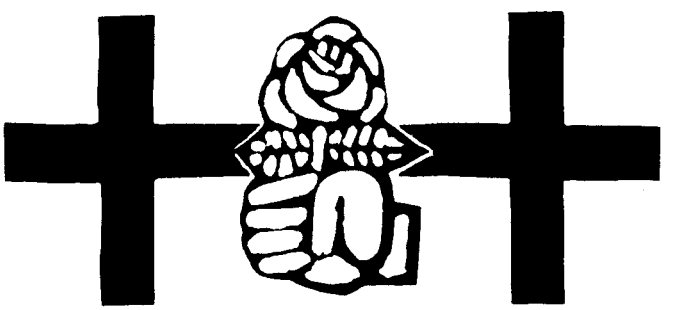
The League has existed since 1929 and presently includes associations of religious socialists in Austria, Denmark, Finland, Holland, Sweden, Switzerland, and West Germany. Except for Austria these associations are mainly Protestant. For reasons that are difficult to understand the Christian Socialist Movement of England, a lively and influential organization, did not show up. When pressed for an explanation one of the organizers replied, "The British have always been reluctant to join continental movements." Although French polls report that twenty-five percent of practicing Catholics voted for Mitterrand, the French were not represented either, except in the person of the delightful Claude Ashe, a black African from the Congo by way of Paris.

In short, there is work to be done on the road to a truly international movement. Catholic socialists were a strong presence for the first time. They represented not only Austria but nine countries of Latin America, plus an international movement from Southern Europe led by the earnest intellectual, Alfredo Luciani of Milan. Luciani publishes an interesting magazine, *ASCE News,* the ASCE standing for *Azione Socialista Cristiana Europea,* or European Christian Socialist Action. It is gaining strength in Italy, where the whole question of socialism and Catholicism has acquired new relevance with the emergence of a socialist prime minister, Bettino Craxi. *ASCE News* prints articles in different languages, but its English translations leave much to be desired.

The problem of language and communication impresses one again and again in every effort to build international cooperation. There were facilities for simultaneous interpretation at Bommersvik, but the only two languages interpreted were English and Spanish. The reliance on English was significant since only four Americans and a South African appeared to be native speakers of it, underlining the extent to which English has become the *lingua franca* of international communication.

The Swedes tend to be good at English, and one of the best was the chairman of the Congress, Bertil Zachrisson, postmaster general of Sweden, former minister of education and the first Christian socialist to sit in a Swedish cabinet. Nevertheless, the League of Christian Social Democrats occupies half a floor in the Social Democrats' national headquarters in Stockholm, has a staff of eight fulltime employees, publishes a lively weekly, and has nine thousand members scattered throughout the country. It describes itself as an autonomous affiliate of the Social Democratic party.

In one of the socialist publications given to all the delegates, describing the history of the Swedish labor movement (probably the most and best organized of any free union movement in



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the world), I noticed a picture of Karl Marx. The text, however, noted that Swedish socialists had tended to favor Marx's more moderate German rival, Ferdinand Lassalle, perhaps because "reformism is closely associated with the history of Swedish social democracy." It adds, "The motive is above all a dislike of violence as such, but also a belief that it is meaningless to seize power overnight, unless you have conscious and educated people to lead the new society."

I couldn't help noticing that there was no League of Marxist Socialists which enjoyed the privilege of occupying half a floor in the Social Democrats' building.

What is it about Sweden that has made it such a successful model of the "middle way" between capitalism and Communism? I realize, of course, that not everyone agrees to the fact of Swedish success; in fact, bashing Sweden is a regular event in American journalism, a left-handed compliment in a way, since most nations have so little claim to approximating an ideal that no one would ever think of debunking their performance. Can you imagine a journalist who thought he had a hot story proving that Italy had fallen short of Christian Democratic perfection — or that the U.S. had serious problems? The regular revelations that Sweden is not quite paradise are interesting only because of the suspicions that it might be. The facts remain that the country is not only beautiful but beautifully run, that taxes are high but people get considerable value for them: over the years one of the lowest unemployment rates in the free world, one of the highest per capita incomes, excellent health insurance, pensions, and (by law) five weeks of vacation after one year of employment, trains that not only run on time but are clean, comfortable, reasonable in price, and therefore used by the public. The country is homogeneous and has been spared (some would say evaded) the horrors of the last two world wars; but even so, it is a most attractive demonstration of the claim that democratic socialism works. Many Swedes I met were quick to point to their nation's shortcomings, everything from juvenile delinquency and public drunkenness to pornography. Anyone familiar with conditions in America's great cities is tempted to find these worries laughable.

On Sunday, the last day of the congress, the delegates were guests of honor in the Lutheran cathedral of Stockholm, set among the narrow, medieval streets of the Old Town, where Bishop Carlsson, a Christian socialist himself, welcomed them with an excellent sermon on the comparative value of words and actions.

Afterwards, at a reception in a church hall high above the "Venice of the North," a gathering of Swedish Christians listened to four of the delegates. One of them said this: "Christian socialism is as old as Christianity itself. In the Acts of the Apostles we read that the first Christians lived according to a basic principle of socialism, 'From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs.' In chapter 15 we also read what is much less known or understood, that the early Christians were *democratic* socialists. For as Rosa Luxemburg protested to Lenin, 'There is no socialism without democracy.' "

It is doubtful that any of these reminders were necessary for these good Swedish Christians. By their actions they have demonstrated what others have only described in words.

JOHN C. CORT

(John C. Cort, a co-editor of Religious Socialism, *was a delegate to the congress from the U.S.*

Washington report

ENDOWING DEMOCRACY

AN IDEA THAT CAME & WENT

EMBARRASSMENT HANGS heavily these days over the National Endowment for Democracy, one of the president's few new foreign policy ideas. In a highly publicized speech a year ago in London, Reagan praised the Europeans for aiding foreign political parties. A new study, he said, would show how America could do the same.

Today the president's plan awaits an uncertain fate in Congress, transformed into quite a different thing from what he proposed. The crooked course of the president's plan is a vivid example of what happens to new ideas in Washington if you do not keep close watch over them.

The president's speech before the British Parliament had curious antecedents. An ambitious State Department office passed some ideas to a friend on the National Security Council staff. NSC director William Clark got excited about combating Communist penetration of the third world. The result was three paragraphs in the president's London text, enough to set the government process working.

The president might not have moved so fast if he had known more about the German political foundations he praised. The Germans emphasize political training at home, using visiting foreign students, for example, to show both young Germans and their third-world counterparts how domestic and foreign policies are tied together. Overseas, the four German foundations stress low-key and long-term help for indigenous projects.

Former Congressman Don Fraser, a liberal Democrat, tried for years to get his colleagues interested in the German foundations' work in training young voters and party leaders. George Agree, a friend of Fraser and involved in liberal fund raising for congressmen, founded the American Political Foundation (APF) in 1979 as a bipartisan version of the party-related German foundations. Reagan cited the APF in London as the author of the needed study on what U.S. parties could do abroad. The consequences of the president's speech were as mixed as its antecedents. One manifestation was "Project Democracy," a multi-agency effort, funded in the U.S. Information Agency budget, to expand exchanges, conferences, and other training programs to stress democratic development in the third world. The other was the "Democracy Program,"

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the study Reagan mentioned on how private groups like the political parties could aid democracy abroad. Last fall the president found $300,000 in the foreign aid budget for Agree's American Political Foundation to conduct the study. Heading both the APF board and the Democracy Program study was William E. Brock, former Republican National Committee Chairman and now the President's Special Trade Representative.

Between Project Democracy and the Democracy Program, it was not surprising that skeptics and even participants got the names mixed. Did the president himself understand what the London speech would produce? According to one congressional staff member, no one in the administration had a clear idea what Reagan's words meant, least of all the president. The State Department officers involved soon found differences with the National Security Council interpretation. Both State and the NSC saw the world differently from the national party committees and from the Congressional committees involved.

The legislative outcome of the London speech is quite different, in turn, from what either the State Department or the NSC staff foresaw as they assembled the president's words in June 1982. The president may have thought of a new weapon against Communism; his aides may have tried to channel his instincts with some European models; but the Washington politicians saw an opportunity, an opportunity for federally-funded travel, patronage, and rewards for contributors. And the parties controlled the study that would establish the rules.

Headed by conservative Georgetown historian Allen Weinstein, the staff of the study was basically named by the two national party committees. Labor and business were invited to add their staff representatives,which slowed the work but added political protection. By late March, the conclusions were still months away. Unless the Congress acted early in 1983, however, to finance aid for the parties, the idea of party funding close to the 1984 election year could hinder the president and frighten the Congress. At that point Charles Manatt, Democratic National Chairman, and Frank Fahrenkopf, his GOP counterpart, worked with a key House subcommittee chairman to create a strictly party device, not one committead to either ideological warfare or to doing good in the developing countries. The power-wise politicians moved with a single-mindedness which the six-month long APF study did not possess.

Congressman Dante Fascell (D-Florida) became the leader. He told the Democracy Program to produce its report right away. To enforce the order Fascell scheduled a hearing early in April and legislative markup one week later. Since Fascell's subcommittee was working on the USIA budget for 1984, financing the plan was feasible.

The APF staff study responded immediately by assembling on a Sunday, and by the next morning a draft was ready.This was the "interim" report, which was as promptly presented to Fascell by Brock, Manatt, Fahrenkopf, Weinstein, and labor's Lane Kirkland in a public hearing. The National Endowment for Democracy was born.

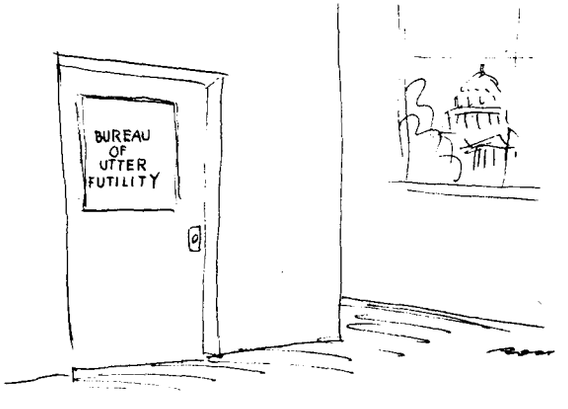
As the chairman said, it was an historic occasion with both parties, labor, and business supporting the same proposal for the first time. It was probably the fastest subcommittee action in history as well. Admittedly, speed was easy when all involved (including Fascell) were both creators of the plan and to be involved in administering its $31 million the first year. Fascell was both a Democracy Program board member and chairman-designate of the fifteen "incorporators" of the National Endowment for Democracy, which would distribute funds to the two party foundations.

No outside witnesses appeared nor did the administration testify, which seemed strange in a hearing on a new federal program. But Brock produced a letter from NSC director Clark who wrote that the president gives his "strong and constant" support to a bipartisan Endowment for Democracy. By a marvel of foresight, Clark had written the letter one month before the interim report was drafted.

Within the APF study group itself, a major dispute had arisen earlier which was not made public: should each party have its own foundation or should a bipartisan mechanism, like APF itself, do political work overseas? George Agree,who founded and maintained APF with bipartisan support, urged a continued bipartisan approach. When the party leaders decided instead on separate party foundations to keep control of the money, Agree was on his way out.

Later, an angry Fascell heard of doubts in the State and Justice Departments. The Office of Management and Budget also resisted a new program to expand the deficit. But the greatest threat,which nearly derailed the bill in its first floor vote,was the idea of a conservative president, committed to reducing government's role, asking federal funds for the political parties for the first time.

In early June, Rep. Hank Brown (R.-Colorado) led the floor fight against Fascell's endowment. It was not a bad idea, the conservative legislator said, but the government should not do it. He lost only by nineteen votes. Ominously, his support was broadly bipartisan. Brown then successfully eliminated specific funds for the two party foundations by a two-to-one margin. Some said Fascell lost by moving too fast, too soon. Others saw him lulled by the business-labor-party support within the Democracy Program study. His staff thinks House members did not understand the issue. A close look at who opposed Fascell, however, shows that liberals, moderates, and



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conservatives all seemed to know exactly the high risk an unsupported and hurried vote for party funds imposed.

Endowment supporters still count the president with them. They hope to regain party funding in the Senate, but a group of conservative senators has blocked the bill. Even if the authorization passes, appropriations will be hard to find with a $200 billion deficit. The president may not have the means, or the will, to fight for what he preached so eloquently in London. Furthermore, some Republicans oppose funds for a Democratic foundation; they know the GOP can find private funds for its foundation more easily than can the Democrats.

Enthusiasm in the State Department for those London ideas has also cooled. What seemed like a clever way to please a conservative president by clothing his urges with European precedents turned instead into a program to help conventional party politicians do some unspecified things abroad.

The German party foundations have serious doubts themselves about the American plan. Dietrich Stobbe, former Berlin mayor and recently head of the Ebert Stiftung's New York office, thinks the president wants to create instant "soldiers of democracy." It will not work, Stobbe believes.

His views are shared by a high official in the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, the Christian Democrats' foundation, who said, "Great patience is needed in political work overseas. This is not a quality you Americans always display in world affairs." The German foundations should be flattered by our attention but they have two fears: that their U.S. colleagues will stumble into a hasty overseas adventure, and that this fiasco will bring the superficially similar German foundations into disrepute.

Don Fraser, now mayor of Minneapolis, is also dismayed at the outcome of the AFP study. Along with Agree, who was fired in June as AFP president by Democratic Chairman Manatt, Fraser still hopes for a bipartisan foundation which starts slowly with careful overseas programs. Modest successes could encourage the two major parties to run some separate activities eventually. Both men apparently overestimated the ability of party officials to rise above immediate concerns over funds and patronage.

Was a good idea rediscovered by Reagan or would American political party foundations always tend to get in trouble overseas? Are the German experiences with their foundations relevant to other democracies? Do our political parties, lacking both firm principles and continuity of leadership, have anything to teach, or learn, abroad? These are some of the questions a careful study might have examined. Instead, the president and some others in Washington lost their way. One of Fraser's colleagues commented: "I only hope they haven't ruined a good idea forever." CLIFFORD P. HACKETT

(Clifford P. Hackett has served in the Foreign Service and on the staffs of congressional committees involved with foreign affairs.)

Of several minds: *John Garvey*

THE USES OF TRAGEDY

POPULAR PASSION & SELF-DECEPTION

WHAT SHOULD a government do when an unarmed civilian passenger plane is shot out of the sky for having committed no crime greater than having strayed into the airspace of an enemy power? And what is the proper response when the offending power first stalls, fails to tell the whole truth, and immediately reacts with what can best be described as an attitude which comes down to "We are sorry, but. . . ."

Well, the United States didn't encourage its allies to cancel all El Al flights, nor did it use the incident to underscore claims that Israel was a uniquely evil government or to shore up its own hawkish defense position. When Israeli jets shot down a Libyan 727, killing 106 of its 113 passengers, we expressed our deep regret, but pledged to continue to work for peace between Israel and Egypt, a country which had expressed immediate outrage at the downing of a flight on its way from Tripoli to Cairo.

There are important differences between the 1973 tragedy and the one which has most recently occupied our attention. The differences and similarities don't matter at all to the murdered parties, of course, whose opinions vanished in a ball of fire the moment someone took military orders and power-paranoia more seriously than the existence of other human beings. But the reactions which followed, in Israel and internationally, are instructive. There were expressions of outrage, profound sorrow, and regret. Israel said at first that the pilot of the downed plane had deliberately ignored radio queries and warning shots; survivors said no warning shots had been fired. The pilot, it turned out, had not acted with the deliberation the first Israeli versions of the story suggested, but had been genuinely confused. Israel did apologize, and eventually paid $3 million in compensation. But the difference is one of degree, not of kind. The principles involved in both incidents are the same: it is clearly not acceptable to shoot civilian planes out of the air, even where national paranoia is either a habit or is founded in reasonable assumptions about your enemies — and the argument could be made that this is true in varying degrees of both Israel and the USSR.

The most intriguing difference is in the way the incident was handled by the American government, the news media, and the populace. The weirdly symbiotic relationship between the three is most apparent at times when rare dramatic crises call for instant responses. The covers of *Time* and *Newsweek* both featured Korean flight 007; both magazines

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spoke of murder and atrocity. It is true that in 1973 *Time* called the Israeli action indecent; but there was about our reaction to that incident nothing so breathless and apocalyptic — or, more important, so self-righteous — as our handling of this one. *Time*'s cover story in the 1973 issue which covered the Israeli action was about Carlos Castaneda, author of a series of books for the Oh Wow set, and *Newsweek*'s cover dealt with the high cost of eating. Everyone's regrets were phrased in civil and measured tones.

This incident, on the other hand, is played for all the Manichean thrills possible; horrible them out to kill off innocent everybody else. The government goes into a moral swivet, Reagan and Kirkpatrick and Shultz all taking what is obviously the side of the angels, while the press pants after The Story. And this appeals to something deep in the people who need to use incidents like this as a sort of moral dipstick to see how good and committed they are — and how cheaply they buy that feeling! They dump Russian vodka down the toilet and feel good about it.

There is no argument to be made for Russia's action, which is every bit as dreadful as the Reagan administration says it is. But the U.S. administration is after other fish. It will use this tragedy to beef up its MX and Pershing deployment plans, to push for increased defense spending and to make our own intrasigence on defense issues seem reasonable; and it will do this hoping that no one pays much attention to the similar action taken by an ally, and our own very dissimilar reaction.

There are other interesting cases of similar incidents and dissimilar reactions. Take the seizure of the Pueblo and the taking of American hostages in Iran. When the Pueblo was captured by the North Koreans our government, after dithering awhile, admitted that it was a spy ship, lied an apology, and got the men back alive. But Carter, perhaps worried about his own wimpy image and the sense that America was powerless, made hash of the already terrible Iranian situation by blundering in a crude military way, and a nation which had lost Vietnam and which had backed the fallen Shah felt that here, at least, it could vent all sorts of spleen and feel righteous. The differences in the reactions to both incidents reveal less about the incidents than about the nation's current reading of itself. The return of the men of the Pueblo was greeted with relief. The return of the hostages from Iran led us into an orgy of national self-congratulation (it wasn't at all clear for what), and there were countless smarmy editorials about how we could at last feel good about ourselves. When the men of the Pueblo were imprisoned in North Korea, America, for all you saw about it on the media, remained at liberty. But America was held hostage in Iran. Why? The media never asked such questions, which is fine with the government: this whipped-up national sentimentality is just what the doctor ordered when you are worried, as governments always deserve to be, that people might be watching your hands a little too closely and too coolly.

The latest tragedy in the history of nation-states versus human beings occurs in a hair-triggered nuclear world which is still, as the USSR has shown so callously, founded on human passion, confusion, and ineptitude. A proper response is difficult enough without using tragedy as a means to partisan political ends.

There are other considerations — the initial U.S. silence about its own spy-plane flight in the vicinity of the Korean plane, for example — but the point I want to make here concerns the destructive use of public opinion and popular passion. We do not like to face this fact in a democracy, but something very ugly can be close beneath the surface of many public passions. People who are trained from an early age to identify themselves with the nation can react even more stupidly, since a reaction to a national slight can be made to seem noble and self-sacrificing, even where it is based on extreme wrong-headedness.

All of us enjoy the feeling of being unambiguously in the right, and when someone insults your mother the anger is plainly the clean, wholesome sort. Nationalist anger feels the same way. Never mind the worst uses ego can make of both clean-feeling passions, further strengthening our most encysted forms of violence and projected self-hatred. The causes have been sanctified, the feeling is clean and bracing, and it presents an exciting alternative to our daily fog and boredom.

Outrage is an emotion which sweeps through us like a strong wind through a neglected and cluttered house — it contains a promise of cleansing. To feel clearly right, and to feel that they (the "they" changes, depending on our current state of mind, our predicament) are clearly wrong, is not only to feel that we are justified and righteous, inaccurate as that feeling may be all by itself; it is to set one's present dull, muted, unfocused existence aside in favor of one which promises to be clean and different. Its main recommendation is its promise that things will be different. We are desperate not to be what we ordinarily are, and an incident at the personal, social, or international level can serve — until it collapses — as a distraction.

I was about to say that politicians and media take advantage of and pander to this hole in the self, and of course they do. But the scarier fact is that there is no wisdom or canniness or even clear-headed manipulation anywhere here, since politicians and reporters are as caught up in self-deception as the rest of us. Confess: you felt in some usually hidden part of yourself at least a slight leaping of the heart, an excitement, when you heard the news of the Korean tragedy. What part of us reacts this way? It plays no small part in our political lives, but we act as if it were nonexistent. The holy quiver in Ronald Reagan's voice might really be heartfelt. That scares me even more than the possibility that it is not.

JOHN GARVEY

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天主教

The Catholic church: an eyewitness report

JAMES T. MYERS

IT WAS COLD as we set out by bicycle before dawn for a forty-five minute ride across town to the Church of the Immaculate Conception. I had heard that Mass was offered on Sunday and I wanted to see what the government's new policy of religious toleration had brought to Chinese Catholics in Taiyuan, this north China city of two million inhabitants.

The Church of the Immaculate Conception was built in 1905 by Franciscan priests. It reopened at the end of 1979 after being closed for nearly fourteen years as a result of the so-called Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. It was this movement, the last great revolutionary upheaval led by the aging Chairman Mao Zedong in 1966, which unleashed the radical furies that took ten years finally to bring under control. As a part of the government's recent policy of moderation, the churches, temples, and mosques have been allowed to reopen and some, though not all, church property has been returned.

All the news stories and reports I had heard or read led me to expect to see a handful of old Chinese women practicing the religion of their youth. It was with something more than amazement then that I found the church full. It is a huge building and will accommodate three thousand souls. The worshipers were of all ages. There were many small children and a sizable percentage of those present was teenagers and young adults. Men outnumbered women.

The Mass was celebrated in Latin, the priest facing the altar. As soon as one Mass was completed, a new priest appeared on the altar and a new Mass begun. Only a handful of worshipers left after the end of the first Mass, the majority choosing to stay for the second Mass as well. It was an extraordinary and deeply moving experience made all the more so by the fact that my American companion and I were the only foreigners in the huge crowd of Chinese, who were deeply involved in their worship. They spent nearly the entire Mass on their knees and were clearly not putting on a performance for anyone's benefit. This was no showpiece church, no Billy Graham in Moscow. There are only about two dozen foreigners in this province of twenty million people and there was no reason to expect that any outsiders would attend the Mass.

The only possible explanation for the presence of so many young people in the church is that they had been instructed at home during the years when the churches were closed and the priests scattered. At one point during the Eucharist there rose a sort of responsorial chant. Everyone seemed to know the words without the benefit of hymnals, and even the smallest children knew the proper rituals of behavior. Like others, I had heard stories about the underground church in China, but to see this obvious public manifestation of that church was indeed unexpected.

What can be made of this restoration of public worship, and what exactly is the condition of the Catholic church in China today? It was to attempt to answer these questions that I visited churches and spoke with priests and bishops wherever I could find them while traveling widely during a recent five-month stay in the People's Republic of China.

The difficulty with learning anything useful in China is access to information. Most Western visitors pass through China in a carefully controlled pipeline. When they travel by train they enter the station through a separate entrance. They stay in special hotels, shop in "Friendship Stores," and see only carefully selected attractions. Foreigners are deliberately shielded from contact with any Chinese but their guides and interpreters, and the fact that there are plainclothes policemen at the door of the Beijing (Peking) Hotel to keep Chinese out, goes unnoticed. I was fortunate as an exchange scholar possessing passing fluency in Chinese to be able to travel freely and extensively without a China Travel Service Guide. Most of my encounters with Catholic clergy occurred when I was alone or in the company only of another American.

Even before the Cultural Revolution closed the churches in China for nearly a decade and a half, the life of the church

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in China was extremely precarious. The priesthoods of the older priests (the vast majority of Catholic clergy in China) would span the anti-Japanese war, the Chinese civil war, and since 1949, the various on-again, off-again policies of the government of the People's Republic. Parts of northern Shanxi Province where I lived were occupied by the People's Liberation Army as early as 1947 and the pressure on the church in the rural areas begun even before "Liberation" in 1949. Following the establishment of the P.R.C. in 1949 the Christian churches were subjected to intense pressure. All of the Protestant denominations were forced to combine into a single "Patriotic" Christian Church. The Catholic church, because of its ties with Rome, became a special target as the worst remnant of Western "imperialism." The church was forced to sever ties with Rome and by the mid-1950's the few foreign priests who had not fled China were occupied in hard physical labor or in jail. Many Chinese priests suffered the same fate, and several of the most "un-reconstructed" have spent all but a few brief periods of the last thirty years in jail.

None of this is especially surprising in view of the Marxist orientation of the Chinese government. Although both the first and second Chinese Constitutions promised the "freedom to believe in religion," they also stressed "freedom not to believe in religion and to propagate atheism." The official state ideology is determinedly atheistic, so that even should religion be tolerated, it would scarcely be encouraged.

Fairly early in my stay I had the opportunity to spend several hours with the Bishop of Taiyuan whose residence is at the Church of the Immaculate Conception. I was accompanied only by an American colleague. We found the iron gates at the street in front of the church locked and made our way around the block to the rear of the church. A middle-aged woman instructed us to park our bicycles and follow her. She brought us to the bishop's office, a modest-sized room with an unfinished wood floor, two wooden desks and several slip-covered chairs. On the wall were a crucifix, several religious pictures, and a printed calendar of church events.

Bishop Zhang is a short, plump man, nearing seventy. He wore the standard blue tunic (known in the West, but not in China, as a "Mao jacket") and a blue cloth worker's cap. He wore no pectoral cross, but a large gold ring with red stone was on his right hand. He was ordained forty-five years ago as a Franciscan priest.

After pleasantries were exchanged, the old man seated himself at one of the desks to take notes. Our female guide took up her post at the other desk to observe. The atmosphere was anything but warm. Although they knew I am Catholic, and were unfailingly polite, it was painfully clear they would have preferred not to receive our visit.

I began with some simple questions about church administration. The church in China today is governed by a council composed of bishops, priests, and lay people. The councils are elected democratically and on the provincial level meet once each year. The national level, made up of representatives of provincial councils, is supposed to meet every four years. In addition to the church government there is a Council of Bishops (also elected), and the Patriotic Catholic Association. There are fifty-six bishops, each equal in rank to the others, each with the power to ordain priests.

ONE OF THE POINTS of confusion in the West concerns the Patriotic Catholic Association of China. This association is not the church *per se* and does not administer church affairs. According to Bishop Zhang, the Patriotic Association is a separate organization. China is in theory a "multi-class" state which is only at this stage "building socialism." Full Communism will come only much later. Thus, in theory, many patriotic groups and associations are presently involved in the task of socialist construction. These associations are semi-official links with the government and although the priests and bishops may be members, the Patriotic Association is kept separate and distinct from the administration of the affairs of the church itself.

The majority of priests in China were ordained before 1949. There are presently no seminaries open for religious study in Taiyuan — although a Catholic seminary recently opened in Shanghai with more than thirty students — so that a young man wishing to enter the priesthood would have to be tutored privately.

The bishop indicated that most of the larger villages have churches which are now restored and Masses are conducted regularly. This is the same story I heard everywhere. When I mentioned some of the changes which have taken place in the Roman Catholic church in recent years. Bishop Zhang volunteered that he thought the changes are a bad idea, especially the practice of using laypersons as Eucharistic Ministers. Other than these observations, he showed little interest in discussing changes in the church since Vatican II.

The church in China is financed much as it is in the West. The church in Taiuyan owns property from which it receives rental income. This process was disrupted during the Cultural Revolution, but much of the property has now been returned. The remainder of church income is derived from voluntary contributions.

It was volunteer labor which put the church back into operation after the change in government policy. All of the altar furnishings are new and are rather crude compared to the

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graceful beauty of the building. During these years, in order to live, the bishop and his priests organized a small factory where they made pails which they sold to the government.

On the question of the relationship between his church and the church of Rome, Bishop Zhang repeated the official position of his government: As long as Rome recognizes Taiwan (the Republic of China) no relationship is possible with the church of Mainland China. In fact it is inconceivable that reunification with Rome should ever be permitted under the present system. The new Chinese Constitution, recently adopted, states quite plainly, "No religious affairs may be dominated by any foreign country." We can all read the meaning of that provision.

I also think that Westerners who visualize a huge underground church loyal to Rome and refusing to receive the Sacraments from renegade "patriotic" priests, are engaging in wishful thinking. There are, to be sure, priests who have steadfastly maintained loyalty to Rome. But the "patriotic" priests are the same priests with whom the Chinese Catholics have grown up. It seems unlikely that they would be rejected by their flock in favor of no Mass and no Sacraments in order for them to assert the authority of the Holy Father in Rome.

MOST OF THE CHURCHES in China have been open again since the end of 1979. The speed with which they were able to get back into operation seems to have depended on how badly wrecked the church buildings were, the strength and dedication of the local Catholic community, and the condition (scattered, imprisoned, etc.) of the local clergy. A few stories from travels here and there:

Huhhot, Inner Mongolia — Mongolia was never the most fertile ground for Christian missionaries who were in competition with Islam, Buddhism, and Sino-Tibetan Lamaism, but the Belgian fathers of the Immaculate Heart of Mary made it their special ministry.

We set out by bicycle in search of the famous Qing Dynasy mosque built about 1690. The mosque has been functioning again since the end of 1980 and although repairs are still being made, the prayer services at mid-day and on Friday were full. I casually asked the mullah if there was a Catholic church in the city. He responded by pointing to a steeple with cross close by.

We bicycled over to find a beautiful Belgian-style church. It was locked. I managed to locate a priest, Father Andrew, who agreed to admit us. The church seats five hundred. The entire interior of the building had been destroyed during the Cultural Revolution. All of the renovations, paintings, and decorations had been made by the local Catholic community.

There are fourteen priests assigned to the Diocese of Huhhot of whom eight are at the church, the others working in nearby villages. All were ordained before 1949 but one, ordained in 1967.

Approximately two hundred of the faithful attend Mass which is celebrated once each Sunday. Father Andrew said that in the past the church had a cemetery but now all of the dead were cremated. He brightened when I mentioned the Catholic seminary in Shanghai. He had heard of it. They would like to organize their own small seminary.

Xi'an, Shaanxi Province — Everyone in this ancient capital of China assured me that the church was closed. I was told by an "expert" guide that the former church had become a food-processing plant, and that Catholics were allowed to hold worship services only on special feast days such as Christmas, although unofficially they might hold "meetings." The following day a Travel Service guide assured me the church was closed. Someone else said there had been a church near the Friendship Store. I went there but found nothing. In a nearby crafts store I asked the elderly manager. He said there was a church nearby, but it was a *ji du jiao* ("Christian," that is, Protestant) church, not a *tian zhu jiao* (Catholic) church. Following his directions I found the gate at the street which led me into the small church courtyard. The pastor greeted me, told me that his was a former Baptist church. He told me his church was full for worship services. He was wonderfully warm and directed me to the Catholic church some distance across town. He assured me it was not closed, had priests and a bishop, and sent me off with a "God bless you" in English.

I found the church by spotting the "Patriotic Catholic Association" sign at the gate of a factory. The reports had been partially true. Saint Francis of Assisi Church had not been converted into a food-processing plant, but a plant had been built in front, blocking any view of the facade.

I was greeted by a kindly old gentleman who told me that he was a priest and had, upon ordination as a Franciscan, taken the religious name Joannes. He introduced a second elderly priest as Father Josephus. They seated me in a small room with sofa and chairs and we chatted in Chinese while tea was served. Both priests were glad, and somewhat surprised, to be alive and back at their church. During the Cultural Revolution Father Joannes had spent more than ten years in jail, their bishop thirteen years, and Father Josephus more than fourteen years. All of their small community of nuns had also been imprisoned. Father Joannes told me that there were four priests at the church plus the bishop, and altogether more than forty priests in Shaanxi (not to be confused with Shanxi) Province. Father Joannes also told me that four new priests had been ordained since 1980, all men in their forties who had been studying for ordination before the Cultural Revolution.

Inside, the church is a jewel. Everything is original. The church interior was not destroyed during the Cultural Revolution. At a side altar several women were fixing paper flowers and polishing candlesticks. They were nuns who had been in jail for more than a decade.

The next day at noon Mass the church was nearly full. Masses are celebrated on Sunday at seven a.m., noon, and seven p.m., and on weekdays morning and evening. When I arrived Father Josephus had already begun. Men were on the left and women on the right of the church. The experience was unexpectedly moving. I saw women with tears in their eyes returning from the confessional and people with tears streaming down their faces after receiving Holy Communion.

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Rumors to the contrary, the church is alive and functioning in Xi'an. But one has the impression that everything is not all right. Priests and bishops are all too wary. They have the look of survivors: cautious, and on guard around foreigners.

I met an American at the Sunday Mass who was living in Xi'an teaching English. While it took me two days to find the church, it had taken him two weeks. He knew the general location and whenever he had a chance he would wander around and look. One day a small child came up to him on the street, took him by the sleeve and began to make the sign of the cross over and over. Speaking no Chinese, the American nodded his head at the gesture and the boy led him to the little reception room and Father Josephus.

Urumchi, Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region — Four days out of Huhhot by hard sleeper train we arrived in the capital of Xinjiang, the end of the line, the most inland city in the world. Our host was a young Kazakh from the Provincial Foreign Affairs Office. He seemed uneasy about our plans and announced that he would be staying in the hotel with us. I asked if there was a Catholic church in Urumchi. "Yes, but it is closed." I asked if there was possibly a priest at the closed church. "Probably so." Would it be possible to speak to him? It might be possible but he couldn't take me. Did he know where the church was? Yes, but he couldn't tell me. My American friend asked him who had given this order. He pointed to the ceiling, indicating that it had come from a higher level.

I decided to try to find the church on my own but a respiratory illness put me to bed. When our host came to see me we had a brief but intense session about not being allowed to visit the church or contact the priest. I told him that it was intolerable and a violation of the Chinese Constitution. It had no effect.

Guangzhou (Canton), Guangtong Province — The Cathedral of the Sacred Heart of Jesus is possibly the most beautiful Catholic church in China. Begun around 1860 and consecrated in 1863, the magnificent Gothic structure was designed and built by the French. It was completely gutted and converted into a warehouse during the Cultural Revolution. It reopened in 1979.

Father James Lin greeted us and served tea in a small reception room on the ground floor of the rectory. Father James had been at the Cathedral for forty-one years. During the Cultural Revolution he and the other priests were "sent away" to the countryside and imprisoned. He survived, he said, "two years on the ground" with only the clothes on his back, never knowing from one day to the next if he would be killed. "The Red Guards could just kill you any time they wanted." He never thought he would live, never thought he would "see a day such as this." "Look," he said, gesturing around the room, "we can furnish our house. We can buy religious pictures. I have catechism classes for the children. Everything is free now." He seemed more grateful to the government than other priests I had met. He was surprised and overjoyed that he wasn't killed or allowed to die in his small prison. Many, he said, were in prison longer than he. "Some twenty years or more; their whole lives." We didn't talk about those who are still in prison.

Beijing (Peking) — Beijing is the only city in China at present in which there is more than one Catholic church open. The Eastern Church (Dong Tang) occupies the site where the house of Father Adam Schall stood and where he died in 1666. The present church is the third to be built on this site, the second church having been destroyed during the Boxer Rebellion in 1900. It is a beautiful building with all of its turn-of-the-century furnishings intact, somehow protected during the Cultural Revolution. There are no priests attached to the church but Masses are said on Sundays by priests from the Nan Tang (Southern Church) Cathedral across town.

The Nan Tang is the central church of Chinese Catholicism. It is built on the site of the house where the great Jesuit Father Matteo Ricci lived and where he died in 1610. The present building, the fourth Nan Tang, dates from the beginning of the twentieth century. The third Nan Tang, like the Gong Tang, was destroyed by the Boxers.

I was greeted by Father Anthony Liu who showed me around the church and grounds. Nan Tang was reopened in 1974, long before any of the other churches in China, but it was open only to foreigners. Only in 1979 were they permitted to admit Chinese Catholics. There are ten priests who share the Masses at Nan Tang and Dong Tang.

During the course of our conversation Fr. Anthony asked where I was living. "I see," he said, "you are from Shanxi University. Perhaps you know my old teacher Father Tian who now teaches foreign languages there." As it happened, I had heard that there was an "ex-priest," whose name I did not know, teaching in the Foreign Languages Department, and I had tried to meet him without success. When I returned from the Urumchi trip I told the head of the Foreign Affairs office (let's call him Li) that I would like to meet Professor Tian and ask him some questions about the organization of the Catholic church in China. I had no idea that there would be any problem. Li promised to look into the matter, and that was the last I heard of it.

By the time I returned from Beijing several weeks later, I again told Li that I wanted to meet Professor Tian, and once again nothing happened. At last I went to the Chairman of the Foreign Languages Department (call him Wang) to see if he could arrange a meeting. He soon reported back that Professor Tian had agreed to meet me at the end of that week.

As Friday arrived I learned that Wang was ill and had asked Li to set up the meeting. I saw Li at the end of the day and asked him when I was to meet Professor Tian. "Do you know this person?" he asked, as if he had heard nothing of the matter previously. I replied that he knew quite well that I did not but had been trying to meet him for some time. "I don't think he speaks English," Li said. I replied that we could speak Chinese. "He speaks Chinese with a heavy accent." I suggested that, as Professor Tian taught French, the interview

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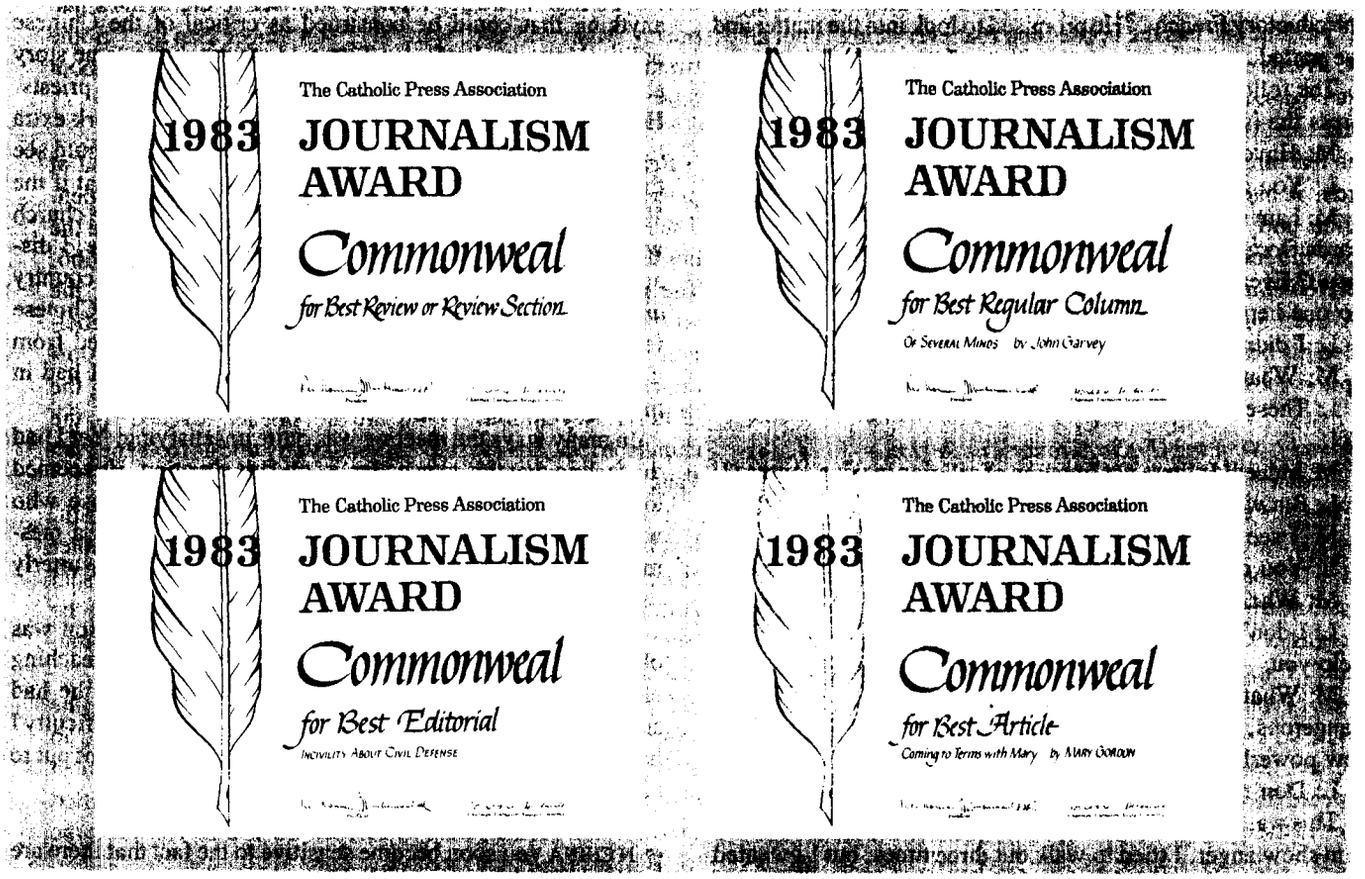

FOR THE second consecutive year, the Catholic Press Association's first-place award for magazine columns went to John Garvey.

First-place for best article was awarded to "Coming to Terms with Mary" by novelist Mary Gordon.

Of the editorial "Incivility and Civil Defense," winner of the Catholic Press Association's first-place award for magazine editorials, the judges wrote: "It is rational, clearly and succinctly written, and marshals the facts beautifully" — a standard *Commonweal* tries to meet with *all* its editorials.

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could be conducted in that language. "But he only teaches introductory French." He promised to look into the matter and we parted.

The following morning I went to Li's office determined to press the issue. The conversation went something like this:

M: Have you arranged for me to meet Professor Tian?

L: You can just go see him yourself.

M: I am sure Professor Tian lives no more than one hundred yards from where we're standing. Why is this matter so difficult? Everyone in China seems to know of his existence but no one here is willing to produce him.

L: I didn't know you were so interested in religion.

M: What does that have to do with anything?

L: These matters are sensitive. This man might be a Catholic!

M: Indeed! Is there not freedom of religion in your country?

L: But we have to be alert to foreign religious propaganda.

M: I see. You do not care to arrange this introduction.

L: You can meet this person. You don't need me.

M: Where does he live?

L: I don't know. You just ask Little Chen (a translator) to help you.

M: What are you afraid of Mr. Li? This man must be very dangerous, or I must. I wonder why you are so frightened by a few powerless people who worship God.

L: Don't you say that to me!

This was the first time since I have known Li that I have seen him show anger. I tried to walk out three times, but Li wanted to salvage the situation. He had given me the runaround for weeks, lied to me, and insulted my intelligence, all without showing the slightest remorse, embarrassment, or understanding of why I should be upset.

The following day I took the issue to the Secretary of the University Communist Party Committee. The Secretary wasn't happy, but said it was the first he had heard of the matter.

Later that afternoon Little Chen came to my room. He told me not to be upset, that I would get to see Professor Tian. I asked him why there was such a problem. "These things can't be decided by just one person," he replied. Why, I asked him, is this such a big deal? "You know why," he said mysteriously. In fact, I didn't know why. I told him that it made them look ridiculous and he agreed.

Three days later Little Chen beckoned me to the Foreign Affairs Office. There was Professor Tian. I wondered who had summoned him. He was a fine-looking old gentleman, as neat and well groomed as the other priests I had met. We agreed to meet in my room at seven-thirty that evening.

Professor Tian arrived at the appointed time. His English was perfect, and we conversed in that language. His Chinese was absolutely standard. As for his French, he had taken his Doctorate at the Sorbonne. He had spent time at the University of Chicago and had taught Thomist philosophy at Catholic University in Latin.

We had barely exchanged pleasantries when another Chinese professor arrived unexpectedly. It made my conversation with Tian more than a little awkward. No one but I said anything that could be construed as critical of the Chinese political system. Professor Tian told me much the same story about the Catholic church that I had heard from other priests. He stressed the fact that Chinese Catholics should work extra hard for national construction so that other Chinese could see that they were good people. He asserted his belief that if the Vatican recognized the People's Republic the Chinese church would have no trouble re-establishing ties with Rome. I disagreed. He emphasized several times that he loved his country *and* his church and stressed the pride that he and other Chinese felt that the oppression of imperialism had been lifted from China. When I raised the subject of the difficulties I had in meeting him, he said gently, "Forget all that."

In many ways the meeting was quite unsatisfying. Yet I had the feeling that this man had mastered his situation. He seemed totally in control, even, in a curious way, over those who would control him, and he was at peace. There was a mesmerizing calm, magnetic gentility about him. I was utterly captivated.

A man with Father Tian's background and education was obviously in exile at this remote provincial university teaching elementary French. I heard from several people that he had suffered terribly. Recalling this and considering the difficulty I had meeting him, there were many questions I dared not put to him.

IN CHINA you soon become sensitive to the fact that there are many questions better left unasked. China is a police state. The difficulties I encountered in meeting Father Tian are only an insignificant sample of the uneasy relationship which exists between the church and the Communist leaders in China. The authorities seem to have an almost pathological fear of the power of the church not kept under a tight rein. Add foreigners to the equation and the fear becomes paranoia.

We should also remember that the Chinese Catholics I met are all free. There are others who are not. Amnesty International recently issued an "urgent action" appeal on behalf of two Chinese priests and a bishop. Both priests were imprisoned for more than twenty years before the restoration of "religious freedom" in 1978, and both have now been re-arrested. Gong Pinmei, Bishop of Shanghai, now more than eighty years of age, has been in prison continuously since 1955. Amnesty International is also seeking the release of fourteen other Catholic priests and lay people who have been arrested "for the expression of their religious beliefs."

In the end, what conclusions can we draw from the renaissance of public worship in China?

One of the most interesting questions to consider is why the government permitted the churches to reopen at all. We can only speculate. The new policy toward religion is almost certainly linked to China's turn toward the West. The key to China's policy of the "Four Modernizations" (the modernization of agriculture, industry, science, and national defense) is Western technology and Western — particularly American — assistance. The reopening is at least partly for our benefit.

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Another aspect of the shift in policy may be related to what the Chinese refer to as the "social order." I was constantly being told that the "social order is not good these days." This seems to refer to the fact that many Chinese do not practice the same degree of self-control as prior to the Cultural Revolution. That explosion of revolutionary violence unleashed an inordinate amount of latent hostility and frustration which have been difficult to bring back under control. The Chinese authorities have resorted to a number of different strategies to deal with the resulting frustration, discontent, and, more potentially damaging, with disillusionment and cynicism. The reopening of the churches, and of the Buddhist temples and Moslem mosques, was certainly a part of this effort.

In any case, the new policy remains a calculated risk. Whatever the government *intends* by allowing the remnants of the church to operate under closely controlled conditions, the result is that people are once more publicly worshiping God, praising Jesus Christ and reading the Holy Bible, which is now being printed and distributed. The consequences of such activities can only be imagined.

There is one further point to be noted. The Chinese government has acknowledged, through the adoption of a number of different policies and campaigns, the failure of their ideology to meet the "spiritual" needs of their people. Indeed, there is almost as much written in the press these days about "Socialist Spiritual Civilization" as there is about economics. Recently there was a nationwide "Socialist Courtesy and Ethics" month. As I write, there is to be a month-long "war on sloth."

All of this points to a deep spiritual malaise, to a spiritual void which the government is attempting to fill with slogans and campaigns. The evidence gathered over a number of years in several different countries seems to suggest that Communist political systems cannot in fact meet those spiritual needs, and wherever the state has stepped aside and permitted the churches to operate, they have not only survived but flourished. This does not mean, of course, that the road ahead for Chinese Christians is going to be anything but difficult and arduous. The state will never encourage and embrace their activities. But the relaxed policy toward religion may, in the end, be two-edged. The Chinese government may, in the words of the ancient Chinese proverb, finally come to realize that it is riding a tiger from which it cannot dismount.

RELIGIOUS FAITH IN COMMUNIST CHINA, II

The curiosity of Christianity

JAMES KENNESON

ON OUR SECOND morning in the People's Republic of China, we met with a representative of the Foreign Experts Bureau, the Chinese office in charge of hiring foreign teachers. This official told my wife and me that our application had nearly been rejected because I was a graduate of Yale Divinity School and made it very clear that anything remotely like missionary activity would be extremely unwelcome. "So much for that topic," we thought. Just as we had assumed, the subject of religion would simply not come up in China.

But we were wrong. The single question most often asked by our Chinese students and fellow professors during our year with them in Zhengzhou was, "Why are there millions of people in the United States who still believe in God?"

The Chinese view of religion has been formed by centuries of what we, and now they, call "superstition." The puristic and beautiful Taoism of Lao Tzu, recently popular in the West, long ago deteriorated into a welter of shamanistic practices which inundated every aspect of life. Buddhism, which arrived in China in the first century, was contaminated by these practices and, though popular among the common people, was never adopted by the learned elite. Educated people were Confucians, and the feudal and hierarchic nature of Confucianism as practiced prevented promotion on the basis of merit and encouraged corruption. The chance blending of these three religions produced a hodgepodge of beliefs and practices which varied from place to place, household to household. Worship was more an act of fear than of reverence or hope of sustenance. Maxine Hong Kingston's books, *Woman Warrior* and *China Men*, give some idea of the effect of Chinese religion on human relationships, and the picture she draws is terrifying. It is certain that the old ways abused women disgracefully and that progress could not have come without eliminating those abuses as well as many others. All direct evidence the Chinese have supports their view that religion is superstitious, backward behavior.

This is strongly reflected in their reactions during religious discussions of any kind. When we tried to tell some Bible story necessary for the understanding of a textual allusion, the class would be in an uproar of hilarity. When a student told about

JAMES KENNESON *is the author of six novels and is presently working on a book about China, where he has spent extended periods of time in recent years.*

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lighting a candle in a church or visiting a shrine, he would be sure to tell it comically so that everyone knew he had only done it as a joke. The other students would giggle, poke each other, and act embarrassed, exactly like American children telling potty jokes. No other topic, even sex in America, about which they were intensely curious, elicited just this kind of response. Religion was shameful, dirty, and yet blissfully intriguing. Most of all, however, it was unprogressive. "If you just mention religion," a student wrote, "you admit being uneducated."

Chinese religion is therefore strictly for illiterate peasants, and our students had no interest in it. They were amazed that we had read Lao Tzu. They disagreed about how much religion there is in the countryside today. Some claimed that Buddhism was being reborn on the communes, while others said the peasants today get to work and solve their problems instead of burning joss sticks. Everyone agreed, however, that city people were immune to the old religion and its ways. This did not apply to Christianity, an urban religion to the Chinese, somehow different from the others. The "young rascals" of Chinese cities, who ride their bicycles too fast, wear dark glasses and open-throated, unbuttoned shirts, often wear fake-gold crucifixes as a symbol of their small rebellion.

The official line is of course that religion is the opiate of the people, but it seems to have become possible to disagree with this. One student wrote that religion had nothing to do with politics — though he went on to say that it could help someone become indifferent to the unfairness of society. But even if religion could be severed from ideology, its negative connection to science is unbreakable. The Marxist line is that men shall become the masters of nature and society through science. Therefore, sometime in the future, religion will evaporate because it will be irrelevant to men's needs. Inevitably, thinks the well-indoctrinated Chinese, this will happen in America, too. But this line fails to explain how America *became* technologically advanced.

From the Chinese point of view, the United States is "living under a contradiction," and, they have been taught, progress requires a totally rational society. Religious beliefs are sure signs of backward unprogressive cultures. Religion impedes modernization. (This concept is so strong that our Chinese friends at first told us that they had *no* customs about such things as shaking hands, table manners, seating precedence, birthdays, weddings, and so on, fearing we would think them backward and irrational.)

When answering the why-are-Americans-religious? question, I began by saying that religion and science are in different realms and ask different questions. "But science has disproved God," I would be told. No one knew what was meant by this since no one had ever given them an argument to back up the bare statement. It was a scientific fact, and the Chinese accepted it much as we accept the fact that scientists can recombine DNA. I usually claimed there was a cow somewhere in the world that spoke French. Most people saw the impossibility of disproving this, but not all would agree to generalize to the impossibility of proving God's nonexistence.

IDEOLOGY PLAYS a strong role in this particular reluctance to generalize, for it is risky to entertain the thought that God might exist. During the Cultural Revolution, 1966-1976 as the Chinese date it, persecution of religion was widespread and brutal, though it is not certain that the government ever intended this. However, once it began, anyone who discouraged it was sure to be labeled a rightist and persecuted himself, so it continued. Churches, mosques, temples, and monasteries were fair game for vandals, looters, and revolutionaries intent on destroying every vestige of the old culture. Worshipers of all persuasions were stripped of their jobs and sent to the countryside in menial capacities; many died under the harsh conditions, some committed suicide, some were killed outright. This has stopped completely, but has not been forgotten.

Still, a Christian cannot become a party member or, if converted, remain in the party. This no doubt discourages some who would like to join the three percent of Chinese who make decisions, but it discourages far more who realize that becoming a Christian will make life very uncomfortable for them. The practice of religion, the government says, is free, and this seems to be true. The catch is that proselytizing and teaching are forbidden. Most Taoist monasteries are down to their last three or four old monks. The Hue (Muslim) minority in our area held no services we knew of, and Hue students told us their only connection to religion was a refusal to eat pork. (One wonders if prohibitions are the most resistant to change.) There was a Christian church in Zhengzhou, our city, the capital of Henan Province, but its congregation was small and not growing. Christians we knew were afraid to attend services since the official climate might change at any time.

The government is now carrying on a quiet campaign to encourage people to develop a "philosophy of life." This has caused considerable confusion, for no one knows exactly what this means or what the government wants. Everyone realizes that service to the Chinese state, party, and people will have to form part of his philosophy, but what else might one include? A few students who had heard the word "existentialism" stopped by to ask us about it. Cautious religious questions increased. Everyone felt obligated to come up with a philosphy of life but feared party disapproval because there had been no statement admitting that Marxism as a total way of living and

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thinking had been found insufficient. Why anything new?

Accustomed to being spoon-fed their philosophy in weekly political meetings, the Chinese were understandably afraid and nonplussed when asked to cook their own. It seems likely that Peking wants to get people thinking again. Most people are cynical about politics and don't want to discuss or think about ideology. The upheavals of the Cultural Revolution were so terrible that the average Chinese has been able to think of nothing but bare survival. Eventually, the party will propagate a Marxist philosophy of life which will be accepted, at least on the surface, by everyone. In the meantime, many Chinese are thinking about something other than the next meal and trying to fit their lives into a wider and more meaningful context. Unfortunately, they lack the knowledge needed to get very far in the process.

WITH TEACHING forbidden and religious books very scarce, it is not surprising that next to nothing is known about Christianity. A student paper said, "There are two kinds of people in America: Christians and Catholics." Conversely, we were sometimes asked, "Are you Protestants or Christians?" Understandably, distinctions are not important when the basic question is God's existence. It is surprising, however, that next to nothing is known about science, either. Though we kept telling ourselves that we were teaching English students and professors, not scientists, and that we were in a province where education had never been good, we were still astonished at how few people could outline a theory of the origin of the universe or of evolution. Mere phrases were accepted in place of facts and theories.

The Chinese Communist notion of explanation seems to be conditioned by sloganeering. By our standards, it is woefully inadequate. Giving something a name is often accepted as a full explanation. "Feudalism" is blamed for almost anything that goes wrong; both government and ordinary people throw this word around with such abandon that it's impossible to find out what it means and what the cause of a given injustice is thought to be. "Leftist influences," the newspaper said, caused the recent floods in Szechuan Province. I asked a professor who was complaining of being tired why he couldn't sleep the night before. "I had insomnia," he answered immediately. Students and professors alike constantly attempted to persuade me to accept or promulgate one-phrase formulations of the themes of complex stories. For those few who had heard of the Big Bang, "There was a Big Bang" explained creation. They know nothing more about the theory and cared less. They readily admitted that, as far as they knew, science could not say where the stuff of the universe had come from and, after long discussions, they usually agreed that this was not the kind of question science was likely to be able to answer. They also saw that science could never answer the common, human "why" questions, and they found this more than a little disturbing.

"Labor makes man," a quote from Engels, constituted their knowledge of evolution. The idea of the survival of the fittest was known by some, but no one understood that the fittest produced more offspring, making survival a long-term affair rather than the outcome of a bloody battle between species. Natural selection and mutation were new concepts. The newest idea, however, was that the Genesis story did not have to be taken literally, and this was difficult to grasp, for the modern Chinese are definitely literalists.

LET ME GIVE an example from literature. A class of young teachers, who had been convinced at last (I thought) that fiction was not true in the ordinary sense, read John Collier's short-short story, "The Chaser." A young man goes to an old man's shop to buy a love-potion. The old man describes his potion's wonder-working power, says its price is five dollars, and adds that he has a fantastic, untraceable poison which sells for a thousand dollars and which many love-potion purchasers return to buy. The young man ignores this. The old man explains how the beloved will want to be with him every minute, know his every thought, be told about his dreams, never take her eyes off him, etc., then mentions the poison again. The young man, oblivious to the warning, buys the potion. The story ends with the old man saying, *"Au revoir."* When asked to state the theme of this tale, one woman wrote, "A too-possessive love might not be good," but the other ten people in the class played a variation on the theme, "It is easy for old people to cheat young people out of their money."

Since love-potions do not exist, the young man has been cheated and the story has no more to say. And if God did not create man on the sixth day, the Bible has nothing to tell us about God's lordship of life. Fictions not true in the literal sense cannot be true in any sense. Literalism seems to be a corollary of unsophisticated Marxism. Symbolism and metaphor are seen as cousins of idealism, which is, of course, anathema. The propaganda machine trains people badly, but it does train them to think in terms of dichotomies — the simpler, the better: good/evil, fiction/reality, materialism/idealism, leftist/rightist, backward/progressive. This way of thinking makes it difficult for the Chinese to detect meaning in texts and, more seriously, hinders them in dealing with both ambiguity and ambivalence — not only in texts, but also in their personal lives.

Strangely enough, however, once we had discussed a text enough for the theme to emerge, especially if it was a simple text like "The Chaser," everyone saw and understood it with adequate quickness. But making the leap from story to possible meanings in reality was simply too difficult for all but an extremely small number of students. It required thinking for oneself, something the educational system, based entirely on rote learning, profoundly discourages.

Nevertheless, some Chinese are thinking for themselves, and, as their continual questioning showed, they are perceiving a contradiction in their own thinking. Europe and America, model advanced societies, are Christian, and the only way to eliminate the contradiction inherent in that statement is to assume that Christianity might be a different, *un*backward religion. Ironically, years of anti-religious propaganda coupled with the drive to modernize have together created a

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great deal of interest in Christianity, far more than in any other religion. Interest and curiosity do not, needless to say, add up to belief. Whether anything will come of all this interest — will be *allowed* to come — is another question entirely, one which I would have to answer gloomily even though the philosophy of life campaign, if more than temporary, makes me pause. But it is certain that many people in Communist China today are beginning to wonder if Christianity might just possibly be true.

Stage

CLASSICS IN CANADA

FROM 'CYRANO' TO 'SIMPLETON'

ONCE IT WAS possible to visit Canada's celebrated summer theaters—the Stratford Festival and the Shaw Festival at Niagara-on-the-Lake—and see most of what was available during a brief stay. Now, with three busy theaters at both festivals, the best one can do during a quick visit is to sample the wares. Stratford is the senior institution, the more affluent, and, judging by the plays I saw, the less interesting of the two. Neither festival is wedded to the playwright it was founded to celebrate; I was told that it was Gilbert and Sullivan I should see at Stratford, *Cyrano de Bergerac* at the Shaw.

I passed on G & S, but I did see the *Cyrano,* which proved an excellent production, elegantly efficient in general, remarkable in its leading performer. It is customary to cast a matinee-idol type as Cyrano (José Ferrer is the happy exception I remember) and to use the make-up nose as a purposely unconvincing disguise for a visually romantic hero. No such thing with Heath Lamberts, the Shaw's Cyrano. A short, stout man, physically at odds with the familiar idea of Edmond Rostand's hero, at rest Lamberts resembles a teapot, the immense nose he wears extending like a spout. Although the actor has played a wide variety of roles, comic and serious, he is usually described as Canada's most accomplished farceur. It is understandable, then, that he should be so good at Cyrano's invective, vigorously rendered by Anthony Burgess in this adaptation, but Lamberts is just as impressive in the romantic speeches, and whatever body control he has learned in farce is so well translated into the derring-do of swordplay that one quite forgets that there is hardly an actor on stage who would not have had the reach on him in a sword fight. Lamberts is well supported by the other leading players and the ensemble work under Derek Goldby's direction is busy, particularly in the theater scene and at Arras, without being intrusive. There is an unwritten rule in large-cast productions these days that all supernumeraries are either eccentric or deformed (*v. As You Like It* and *The Country Wife* at Stratford), but in *Cyrano,* where the actors have presumably been given individual business, they work together to establish the milieu and then properly fade into the background to give the stage to the central characters and the main action.

Although *Cyrano* was as good as it was touted, I was even more pleased with *The Simpleton of the Unexpected Isles* because it is a good Shaw play one seldom has a chance to see and because, although it is played broadly, particularly by Douglas Rain as the somewhat bedraggled angel who comes to announce the judgment, Shaw's ideas are not sacrificed to the comedy as they so often are in Shaw productions today. There is a misleading slide show at the end of the play, a gallery of post-*Simpleton* world leaders and a shot of the mushroom cloud, which contradicts the main thrust of the play reflected in Prola's final speeches. Although failure and disaster are acknowledged by Prola, as in so much of Shaw's work of the 1930s, her words are rich with hope and promise, convincingly so in Frances Hyland's attractively commanding performance. If the tacked-on ending suggests that the director was afraid the audience might miss the contemporaneousness of Shaw's play, for the most part Denise Coffey let Shaw's sensible lines do their work and his cartoon-like comedy blossom amid the significance. I could have done without some of the mannerisms (poor Nora McLellan was asked to cock her head, open-mouthed, after each line as though she were Martha Raye selling tooth cleanser) and Tom Wood, as Iddy, did not need to milk every line for laughs, although he is so funny a performer that I forgave the excess. In any case, these are small blemishes on a first-rate *Simpleton.*

Contrariwise, at Stratford one tended to find occasional choice bits amid generally indifferent work. John Hirsch, the festival's new artistic director, has crippled *As You Like It* with an interesting idea about the conflict of Good and Evil. The play opens with a Dickensian street scene, marked by images of cruelty, which modulates into Duke Frederick's court, tyranny of the blackest sort as the lush costumes testify. Unfortunately, the leaden implications of the opening settle over the whole play and Arden, although more lightly dressed, is almost as forlorn as the outside world. Jacques is no longer a comic railer; he is tearful in his distress. Except for Mary Haney's charmingly knowing Phebe, the performances range from acceptable to impossible and the whole production is flaccid.

Richard Cottrell's *The Country Wife* is more consistently lively, although it lacks both the bite and the fun that the Wycherley play provides, largely because the Horner is so nondescript. There is an excellent Pinchwife (Graeme Campbell), an attractive Margery (Domini Blythe) and a Lady Fidget (Patricia Conolly) who might serve for anyone who has not seen Pamela Brown in that role, but I distrust a production in which what one best remembers is Sparkish's wedding suit. But then Stratford is famous for its costumes.

The most interesting of the three plays I saw at Stratford was *Richard II,* also directed by Cottrell. An oddly static production in which the characters simply stand while the verbal play goes forward, it is a proper context for the slow development of Brian Bedford's Richard. Not so histrionic as the customary Richard, this is a quiet, ironic king, cold in his amiability as in

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his malevolence, giving the impression of intelligence while allowing the country to collapse around him. Cedric Smith's Bolingbroke, unlike his Horner, is forceful, if only by contrast to Bedford's Richard, and there is one supremely funny scene in which a distraught and persistent Duchess of York (Pat Galloway as Edna May Oliver) pleads for her son's life. For consistency of tone, however, I'll stick with the Shaw, with *Cyrano* and *Simpleton*. GERALD WEALES

Screen

MISBEGOTTEN MOON

THE WORST YET

FILM NOIR is becoming the *bête noire* of the movie industry. Actually, this kind of film, the atmospheric thrillers that began being made here in the 1940s, has always been avoided by audiences. The ones that are thought of as great classics now — *Double Indemnity, The Big Sleep,* et al. — were not box-office smashes in their day. It was only the moviemakers who loved these films, not moviegoers. Despite delayed reactions, however, it can at least be said of the early examples of the genre that they *were* good movies. Young directors love to make them as much today as they did thirty-five years ago, and occasionally a new one comes along, like Lawrence Kasdan's *Body Heat,* that is great. But I think that by and large this genre has run its course. It needs a rest. Most recent efforts to revive or pay homage to it, such as Wim Wenders's listless *Hammett,* have been awful. Jean-Jacques Beineix's *The Moon in the Gutter* is the worst yet.

Film noir was of course a French invention, and the hardboiled writers who fed the genre, including a number of Americans, were as celebrated in France as they were here. A perfect example would be David Goodis, who wrote the novels on which were based the forties' Bogart thriller, *Dark Passage* and, later, François Truffaut's *Shoot the Piano Player*. *Moon in the Gutter* has been adapted by Beineix and collaborator Oliver Mercault from yet another Goodis book. It's the story of a stevedore whose sister has been raped and murdered. While he is brooding on the tragedy and craving revenge against the unknown assailant, a woman comes into his life — a rich and beautiful woman who is just slumming at first, but then falls in love with him and tries desperately to pull him out of his funk. A man torn thus between sex and violence is classic material; with Gerard Depardieu as the stevedore, Gerard, and Nastassia Kinski as the woman, Loretta, this film had a certain promise to which it never lives up.

Beineix's previous film, the hit *Diva,* might also have led us to expect something better this time. *Diva* wasn't exactly a *film noir* itself. Its appeal lay in its being something new that didn't quite fit any of the old genre categories. It was a pastiche of punk culture, *policier* fiction, and nonsense. It had a kind of verve and flair all its own. It constantly surprised. The words that come to mind most readily to characterize its energies — panache maybe, or even pizzazz — are the ones you would use to praise a striking layout in a fashion magazine. But in *Moon in the Gutter,* success has gone to Beineix's head. What was amusingly light-headed in the earlier film is ponderous in this one. The eclectic imagination, the nimble mix of settings and scenes that worked so well before, now moves in slow motion. Where the other movie was quick-witted, the new one is torpid, vapid.

Diva was all dazzling poses, with very little attention to human psychology. This time Beineix has tried to make a film that's all relationship, one that's only about what passes between the characters emotionally. He fills almost every scene with expressive glances and significant exchanges. That's why it takes him so long to tell his story. The problem is that a movie paced this slowly can't work if it's trying to be pregnant with meaning. On the contrary, it should be sterile. The acting should be blank, the image "ironed flat," as Robert Bresson once put it. Otherwise, the action becomes cloying, pretentious, hopelessly melodramatic. Far from achieving the kind of intense relationship he hopes for, Beineix creates two characters who don't seem to connect at all. Kinski appears to be modeling her performance on Ingrid Bergman in *Notorious* (she looks rather like the young Bergman, particularly around the mouth); Depardieu, lounging moodily in the dilapidated courtyard of Gerard's house, reminds me more of Brando in *Streetcar Named Desire*. It's as if Beineix's two stars were in different movies.

Kinski has a penchant for bogus scripts with meretricious heroines in them, as she has shown lately by starring in Paul Schrader's *The Cat People*, James Toback's *Exposed* (opposite Rudolf Nureyev) and now *Moon in the Gutter*. She has no taste. She chooses her vehicles the way a moony teenager might choose to identify with the heroine of a trashy novel. At least Kinski feels at home in a movie like this, though. Depardieu is clearly lost and confused. He shrugs his way through his role. His performance is so off-beat, it nearly falls right off the screen at times.

Scratch the surface of any *film noir,* and you'll find a romance underneath — an uneasy, suspicious, painful, on-again-off-again romance, but romance nonetheless. Think of Bogart and Bacall in *The Big Sleep,* or William Hurt and Kathleen Turner in *Body Heat*. The reason *Moon in the Gutter* doesn't work is that there's never enough plot to generate the tension such romance needs to be credible. If Beineix is unable to give heart to his characters, he is also unable to imagine the kind of heartless world in which they are supposed to be living. The two failures are mutual. So are those between the director on the one side, and his case on the other. In fact I strongly suspect that at least for now, as I said at the outset, this whole genre is washed up. COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.

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Books: BLACKS ON THE DIAMOND

BASEBALL'S GREAT EXPERIMENT
JACKIE ROBINSON AND HIS LEGACY
Jules Tygiel
Oxford, $16.95, 392 pp.

BRANCH RICKEY: A BIOGRAPHY
Murray Polner
Atheneum, $14.95, 207 pp.

INVISIBLE MEN
LIFE IN BASEBALL'S NEGRO LEAGUES
Donn Rogosin
Atheneum, $14.95, 283 pp.

Patrick Jordan

BASEBALL pervades the American psyche. Eugene J. McCarthy has written that it is *the* metaphysical sport, and Lance Morrow that it is "a form of American mysticism." As a bureaucratic society fueled on massive movements of paper, we find it reassuring that Babe Ruth and Jackie Robinson are on our postage stamps. And as host country to the 1984 Olympics, we plan to introduce baseball as a demonstration sport next year in Los Angeles.

The literature of baseball is vast. Roger Angell's epistles on the sport have become *New Yorker* State of the Unions. American biographers, historians, and sociologists retell the past and update the world in terms of baseball, our truest civil religion. When a black astronaut first orbits the earth and a black preacher contemplates running for the presidency, we are not surprised to find new volumes appear to retell and interpret the story of professional baseball's belated but revolutionizing integration.

Jules Tygiel's *Baseball's Great Experiment* will become required baseball literature. As Satchel Paige said of his own fastball, this is "thoughtful stuff." Written by a social historian who handles his tools with finesse, Tygiel's study will likewise become a standard in the history of Jim Crow. It is based on extensive scholarship, and graced throughout with nuanced interviews.

Tygiel reports that The National Association of Base Ball Players (the first organized baseball league) forbade the inclusion of blacks on league teams in a written code in 1867. When it disbanded several years later, other leagues relied on "gentlemen's agreements" to exclude nonwhite players. And while there were twenty or so black players integrated on northern teams during the 1870s and '80s, by 1899 there were none. "By designating some people as unworthy of admission, the baseball community elevated the status of those accepted into the profession," writes Tygiel. For a half-century white baseball would reflect the hypocrisy and racism of American society.

In response, blacks formed teams and leagues of their own. Talent abounded. Black baseball became a rare area of black entrepreneurial success. Innovation marked both play and style. (Black leagues pioneered night baseball, and even fielded several women players.) But what underlay the black baseball endeavor was a thirst for acceptance and the opportunity to play in organized (white) ball. As Rube Foster put it when he founded the Negro National League in 1920, "We have to be ready when the time comes for integration."

That time came with World War II. Population migrations and the war effort broke down certain racial stereotypes. The lure of possible pecuniary benefits for teams and a glittering assortment of talent in the Negro Leagues enticed white owners to finally consider integration. Moral principles influenced a few, and prodding from the press (black and white) as well as political agitation all created a climate suitable for baseball's great experiment.

That experiment is rightfully personified in Branch Rickey and Jackie Robinson who broke the baseball color line in 1946. As Tygiel demonstrates, the retelling of this story will never grow stale. It is, in fact, the pulsing heart of Tygiel's tale, and it carries the reader with excitement throughout. Tygiel enhances the drama by situating baseball in its wider, national milieu. He describes Branch Rickey's masterful plan to integrate baseball and those he incorporated in the endeavor. Rickey sought the advice of academics and sociologists such as Dan Dodson of New York University and Professor Frank Tannenbaum of Columbia. Tygiel details as well the hesitant pace at which integration once initiated progressed (only in 1959 did Pumpsie Green break the color line with the Boston Red Sox), and the demise of the Negro Leagues following integration. The author is clear that as yet integration is incomplete. Quoting a 1982 survey of twenty-four major league clubs (with the Yankees and Red Sox refusing to cooperate), Tygiel discloses that "blacks held only 32 of the 913 available white-collar baseball jobs, including secretarial positions. Of the 568 full-time league scouts, only fifteen were black." He concludes, "After four decades of integration the persistence of discrimination clouds baseball's proudest achievement." It clouds the national horizon as well.

Baseball's flair is best demonstrated in its personages. Murray Polner's sympathetic, authoritative biography *Branch Rickey* is bright and agreeable. A baseball genius, Rickey fashioned extraordinary baseball organizations and assembled remarkable casts of athletes for over fifty years. The father of the farm club system and major league expansion, Rickey was, in the words of Red Smith: "player, manager, executive, lawyer, preacher, horse-trader, spellbinder, innovator, husband and father and grandfather, farmer, logician, obscurantist, reformer, financier, sociologist, crusader, sharper, father confessor, checker shark, friend and

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fighter." Polner conveys all of these diverse aspects of Rickey's character. Whether Rickey was "a genuine American hero," as Polner asserts, or merely "an American original," as Tygiel writes, depends probably on temperament. Polner's characterization is engrossing.

Donn Rogosin's *Invisible Men*, a short history of the Negro Leagues, builds on such classics as Robert Peterson's *Only the Ball Was White* and John Holway's *Voices from the Great Black Baseball Leagues*. Black baseball history has become available to a wider audience through books, such documentary movies as "There Was Always a Sun Shining Someplace — Life in the Negro Leagues," Rogosin's own radio interviews with Negro League players on National Public Radio, and even a remarkable set of early black stars baseball cards published by a St. Louis collectibles firm. While well intentioned, *Invisible Men* unfortunately bears the mark of a radio production. It lacks structure, and by relying on oral testimony, often combines important reflections with diverting details. Furthermore, the author attempts to make amends which can never be made: the tragedy of those who were excluded from organized baseball will always be that. Let us never forget.

Baseball, as society, is ever changing. The former American League umpire Ron Luciano recently stated: "When I started, it was played by nine rough competitors on grass, in graceful ball parks. By the time I was finished, there were ten men on each side, the game was played indoors on plastic, and I had to spend half my time watching out for a man dressed in a chicken suit who kept trying to kiss me." And so the books will continue.

Sexism in the church

A MAP OF THE NEW COUNTRY

WOMEN AND CHRISTIANITY

Sara Maitland
Routledge & Kegan Paul,
$12.95, 235 pp.

SEXISM AND GOD-TALK

Rosemary Radford Ruether
Beacon, $16.95, 300 pp.

IN MEMORY OF HER

Elisabeth Schüssler-Fiorienza
Crossroad, $19.50, 376 pp.

Arlene Swidler

MUCH of the appeal in Sara Maitland's *A Map of the New Country* lies in her perspective; she is an Englishwoman, an Anglican married to a priest, and she gives us an overview which is both international — at least British-American — and interreligious.

It is striking to see how all the ordination issues facing Roman Catholic women today have already been confronted within other churches. Does the very seminary process result in cooptation? Should women press for ordination, knowing that ordained women, though having greater influence and visibility, may mute their criticism? Should women celebrate "illegal" Eucharists, or should they develop their own liturgies? And have women perhaps overinvested in the whole ordination issue? These are questions Catholics sometimes get rather dogmatic and righteous over, and it is helpful to read of the honest, intelligent disagreement among women of other churches.

In a good chapter on "Women in the Bureaucracies" Maitland notes that although collegiality, lay participation, and ecumenism have all enlarged our bureaucracies, we have not developed a theology of institutions. It is not only within Roman Catholicism that clericalism and sexism flourish. Examples from both British and American churches show women massed in the lower echelons of the bureaucracy and pay scale, typing, answering phones, and cleaning. Following Anne Scheibner, Maitland argues that the church's institutional form should itself be used as an opportunity for special witness.

Maitland's perspective does, unfortunately, have one weakness. Like so many non-Catholics, she is fascinated by Catholic nuns. Except for a fruitful interview with Rosemary Radford Ruether, Maitland's American Catholic sources seem to have been mainly upper-echelon sisters.

In-depth conversations with the leadership of the Women's Ordination Conference or St. Joan's Alliance in this country would have revealed what is one of the two or three main issues today: the barriers between sisters and laywomen. This tension is relevant to Maitland's other themes. Nuns, whether or not they like it, are really semi-clerics. If, despite this, laywomen and nuns today can forge and maintain unity, there is hope that women entering either the priesthood or the bureaucracy tomorrow can also resist aligning themselves with the old-style clerical and hierarchical point of view.

Rosemary Radford Ruether's *Sexism and God-Talk* is firmly Christian theology. During the past few years Ruether has been a leader in defending the possibilities of Christian feminism. Though sympathetic to their goals, she has accused members of the goddess-movement of a "simplistic" reading of the Bible "through a screen of hostile caricature," and of reversing roles in a way that would do psychic harm to men. Such criticism, though but a minor theme here, shows the reflective stance Ruether has adopted.

Feminist theology, according to Ruether, is a rediscovery of the prophetic element in biblical faith. The Bible itself thus provides the resources for her feminist critique of religion.

The importance of this book lies in its breadth: it is, as Harvey Cox puts it, "something like a summa." Methodology, God, creation, anthropology, ministry, eschatology: all these and more are focuses of chapters.

Her Christology is probably of most interest today. "Can a male savior save women?" is a serious question. Already in the second century Church Fathers were teaching that what was not assumed by the Word in the Incarnation could not be saved. In 1976 the Vatican Declaration argued against women in orders because "Christ himself was and remains a man." And a German dissertation published this year argues that the Y or male

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chromosome is clearly "the symbol of transcendence."

Ruether, in her treatment, investigates the androgynous and spirit Christologies which run parallel through history to the dominant patriarchal Christology. Even an androgynous Christ, she points out, remains at base androcentric if it is identified with the male Jesus. In spirit Christology, female as well as male prophets may be exemplars of the Risen Christ, but a wedge is driven between the historical Jesus and the ongoing Spirit.

According to Ruether's synthesis-evaluation, a fresh reading of the synoptic Gospels reveals a prophetic Jesus proclaiming a new social order in which all are sister-brothers to one another. As liberator, Jesus speaks not as a male but as one who has renounced the system of domination, including the oppression of women. Those who have been liberated then themselves become liberators. "Christ . . . is not to be encapsulated 'once-for-all' in the historical Jesus."

Elisabeth Schüssler-Fiorenza has been so much in the forefront of the Catholic feminist movement—both as scholar and as strategist—that it is hard to believe that *In Memory of Her* is her first book-length contribution on the subject in English. *In Memory of Her* is an intense, scholarly study so chockfull of detail that the lack of an index can become quite infuriating.

In three of the Gospels the story is told of a woman who anointed the head of Jesus—a sign-action acknowledging him as the Christ and revealing the woman as the paradigmatic true disciple, says Schüssler-Fiorenza. In Mark's account Jesus says, "And truly I say to you, wherever the gospel is preached in the whole world, what she has done will be told *in memory of her*" (14:9).

That, of course, has not happened. The woman remains unnamed in Mark's story, and though the roles of the two other disciples important in Mark's passion story—Judas and Peter—remain vivid, this female disciple has slipped out of our memory. Most of us would not even pick up the reference in Schüssler-Fiorenza's title without an explanation.

This metaphor pretty well sums up the thrust of the book. Women were important actors in the life of Jesus and the early Christian church. The writers of the canonical New Testament have often neglected to write down this part of the story. But details remain, and by a "critical reconstruction" of the narrative we can begin to see how women are an integral part of the history of Christian origins.

Two forms of early Christianity are discussed here. In the "Jesus movement" within Israel women are discovered to be neither peripheral nor trivial, but part of a "discipleship of equals." In the records of the more urban "early Christian missionary movement" we find a curious dichotomy: the Acts of the Apostles shows women only in marginal roles, yet Paul refers to various women as co-worker, apostle, *diakonos*. Here too Schüssler-Fiorenza "rec[illegible]cts" the large and varied role of women.

The earlier, more methodological chapters are difficult but fascinating. The biblical texts are clearly theologically androcentric and culturally patriarchal. What stance does a feminist scholar take addressing them? They must be "evaluated *historically* in terms of their own time and culture and assessed *theologically* in terms of a feminist scale of values," a huge and complicated task, here undertaken courageously.

The critical principle of feminist theology is the promotion of the full humanity of women. Whatever denies, diminishes, or distorts the full humanity of women is, therefore, appraised as not redemptive. Theologically speaking, what ever diminishes or denies the full humanity of women must be presumed not to reflect the divine or an authentic nature of things, or to be the message or work of an authentic redeemer or a community of redemption.

—Rosemary Radford Ruether
Sexism and God-Talk

A narrative still-life

ARARAT

D.M.Thomas

Viking Press, $13.50, 191 pp.

PILGERMANN

Russell Hoban

Summit books, $13.95, 240 pp.

Gene H. Bell-Villada

THAT historical fantasy has become a favored literary genre was confirmed by the recent best-sellerdom of D.M. Thomas's *The White Hotel*. Combining verse, dreams, letters, case studies and straight narrative, it told of Lisa Erdmann, a sexually troubled East European Jewess who, following painful but successful analysis under Dr. Freud, embarks on an operatic career, only to find her delicate balance destroyed by the Nazis at Kiev, where she and her son are murdered. Through mimicry of Freud's style and its climactic scene built on Kuznetsov's documentary novel *Babi Yar*, the book skillfully juxtaposed the two large modern subjects of psychoanalysis and the Holocaust.

Purely as composition, as narrative still-life, *Ararat* approaches *White Hotel* in complexity, but readers shouldn't expect the same wide range. The old set phrase "Russian dolls" is apt here, given the book's Soviet characters, frames-within-frames, and fanciful spoofery. The outer frames concern Sergei Rozanov, a poet and womanizer who, disconsolate in his so-so tryst with a blind and servile graduate student, finds welcome relief in her request that he improvise something (her theme: Improvisation). So he fills up the sleepless night with an ad lib yarn about three writers who agree to a drunken poet's request that *they* each improvise something (their theme: Mt. Ararat).

Their loosely-linked narratives follow, the most substantial being by "Victor Surkov," a poet and womanizer on shipboard to New York in 1980. His dalliances en route with divers passengers recede as he metamorphoses into Pushkin composing *Egyptian Nights*. Fully interpolated via Thomas's own translation, this unfinished novella tells

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of a poet who happens upon an Italian *improvisatore*, who in turn extemporizes a rhymed tale — its theme: Cleopatra and three nameless lovers, each doomed to die after his night of pleasure. The sultry Surkov/Pushkin/*improvisatore* fragment, alas, is "interrupted" halfway by further womanizing, but Thomas/Surkov soon completes the Cleopatra story and also caps the novella twofold, first with Pushkin's own early death in a duel (which was sexually motivated), then by killing off his *improvisatore* in the Decembrist revolt. These literary/erotic escapades are darkened by Surkov's encounters with an aging, mysterious Nord who grimly reminisces about his active role in every modern massacre from Armenia to Vietnam ("I've never retired. One becomes indispensable.")

The rest is anti-climactic. Part 2 catches Surkov in New York — a slippery interview, more females, a poem on Armenia, drinks with an Armenian-American sculptress and her Armenian lover. Part 3, the sketchiest, shifts to Soviet Armenia, where an Armenian-American lady on a *Roots*-type pilgrimage experiences a sordid one-night stand with a local academic and next morning glimpses Ararat from her window. A few further parallels, and that's about all.

D.M. Thomas is a translator of Russian literature, and he puts this knowledge to good use in *Ararat*. I can't vouch for his fictive Russians, but his portraits of American women — earnest, wholesome, slighty naive — ring with a Jamesian trueness. "Musically" adroit in its repetitions of Armeniana, the book is also chillingly eroticized; from Rozanov's on through Surkov's, Cleopatra's and other bedroom scenes, sex figures solely as a means of predatory power — one of *Ararat*'s shifting voices can be as suspenseful as a McBain car chase, though there are few stylistic traits to set off each narrator. Still, the utter legerdemain of *Ararat*, coupled with Thomas's sprightly prose, will dazzle anyone familiar with Borges or Nabokov. It is performance art, a verbal juggling act for the high-tech age. How long these virtuoso routines can move us is of course an open question.

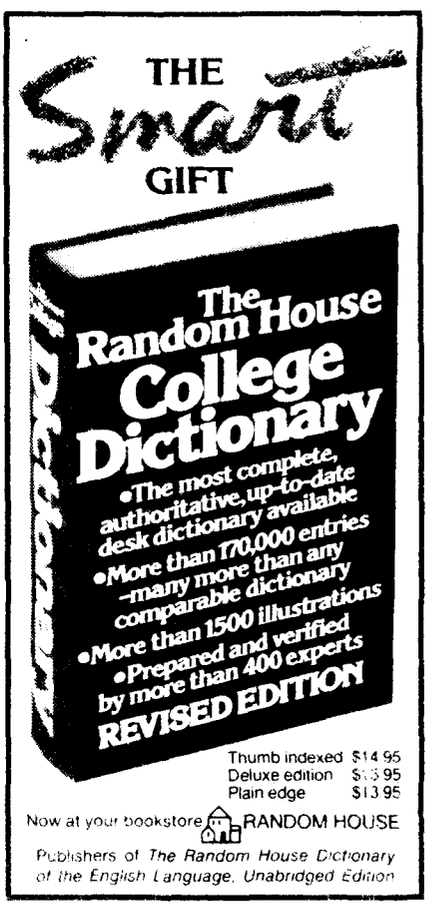
Russell Hoban, an American illustrator and writer living in London, was known for his fanciful children's books (fifty so far!) until *Riddley Walker* earned him critical acclaim. Placed several centuries hence in Cornwall, where dim memories linger of civilizations leveled by nuclear war, the book imagined a neo-primitive hunting society complete with its rituals and traditions plus their native tongue, an eroded colloquial Cockney specially fashioned by the author. The setting and style, however, were better than the actual narrative, which tended toward set pieces in discontinuous mosaic.

Pilgermann differs in every way — formally picaresque, its poetical prose hushed and spacious, its time the First Crusade. The narrator is a pilgrim (German *Pilger*) and also a Jew who has survived anti-Semitic slaughters in a German town. For metaphysical reasons he flees toward Jerusalem, and in the forests he encounters and chats with a series of fantastical figures, including a makeshift monk, a hanged tax collector, a wandering murderess, a talking bear. At sea he links up with a friendly Turk and they head for Antioch. There Pilgermann designs geometric tiles to pave the open-air plaza, soon the site of Platonic dialogues, then bloody deeds — for the Crusaders are coming. Adventures both of mind and body build up; the crusaders invade; Pilgermann falls to the sword of one Bohemond — who in fact seized Antioch in 1098.

Indeed many of the people, places, battles, and dates here are factually true to the First Crusade (which began with a massacre of 10,000 Jews) and are made to shape the broad course of events. And yet *Pilgermann* is less than earthbound. The narrator himself, no longer flesh-and-blood, is but a "conscience," a bundle of "waves and particles" that occasionally turns up as an owl and views things from the vantage of eternity. The atmosphere is thus one of timelessness rather than eleventh century, particularly when the hero drops casual allusions to Vermeer, Kant, Schubert, and electronics. Even his Jewishness recedes after he is discomforted by the parochialism of Antioch Jewry.

Some of the deftest moments in this book are from Hoban the illustrator — a Bosch triptych described, the author's own sample of those geometric tiles. Otherwise he seems less drawn to fiction than to philosophy and eschatology, of which there is plenty here, notably on the problematics of evil. The hero first asks why God "keeps writing slaughter scenes"; by the end we've seen so many murders of Jews, Christians, Muslims, children and beasts (all via the author's oblique prose) that the question surpasses understanding. Hoban's religious intellectualism becomes most evident in the four-page appendix wherein he identifies his scriptural quotes and other sources. Like Borges or Pynchon he strikes me as more metaphysical than novelistic, and I gather he is searching for a medium to convey his manifold skills and thoughts. But as I decoded *Pilgermann*'s high allegory, I started hankering for Flaubert's *Salammbô*, a flawed historical fantasy that errs on the side of pointillist detail, heaping on the ancient bric-à-brac and fashions and foods.

In *Ararat* D.M. Thomas seems con-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tent as a clever textual trickster. Hoban wants more from his words and over-reaches with them. I hope he hits upon the formula.

Reluctant high priest

INTER VIEWS

James Hillman with Laura Pozzo
Harper and Row, $10.95, 198 pp.

Philip Novak

TEN YEARS AGO I read James Hillman's erudite and brilliantly original *Myth of Analysis* sensing psychological genius. Since then my enthusiasm has steadily dwindled, though his popularity it seems has gone the other way. This former director of the Jung Institute of Zurich, now something of a renegade among Jungians, has been hailed as the most original psychological thinker of our time and the founder of a new school: archetypal psychology.

Hillman's originality lies in having taken the psychology of the unconscious to its logical term. Whereas Freud and Jung assumed the superiority of a conscious, analytical standpoint from which the irrational forces of the psyche could be conceptually mapped and rationally understood, Hillman argues that such supposed superiority is but another fantasy, another psychic posture, no freer of unconscious determinants than any other. For Hillman, the psyche is not a hierarchy but an egalitarian pantheon, a field of archetypal patterns, or "god," whose ceaselessly shifting constellations shape our thought, our behavior, and our world. We can never stand above the gods, and psychologically speaking, we are quite unfree. In everything we think and say and do, we do their bidding.

The reluctant high priest of a new polytheism, Hillman thus counsels recognition of all the gods of the psyche. The implications are radical. We thrive psychologically by befriending and communing with our images (the speech of the gods) not by subordinating them to rational interpretation. To the Jungian goal of wholeness Hillman prefers "falling [back] into multiplicity, the psyche's natural mode. Traditional spiritual paths are rejected as soul-*negating* because of their one-sided preference for unity and light. Only when life is lived in and through the soul's pathologies (his word) is soul-making, the central opus of archetypal psychology, furthered.

Working in this vein, Hillman has been prolific and provocative. He has also been annoying. Obscurity, loose ends, and inconsistency are as readily apparent in this work as his massive learning. For example, he will denounce views that dare to prescribe how we "ought" to be, yet his own work distinguishes psychically healthy and unhealthy modes of being, thereby implying oughts right and left. He urges respect for all the "gods" but in practice he neglects all but the Greek gods. His writings regularly contain polemics against other views (such as the Hebrew) which, by his own logic, are but other archetypal voices ("You can't open your mouth without an archetypal perspective speaking through you"). If one charges him with philosophical incoherence, ethical shallowness, or blatant contradiction, he will respond that consistency is not important to him and that, in any case, such charges indicate that one is afflicted with the disease of "monotheistic thinking" or "literalism," epithets Hillman hurls with irritating frequency. There appears to be little ground upon which archetypal psychology can be challenged.

The volume under review is a book-length interview with Hillman tenaciously conducted by a pseudonymous "Laura Pozzo" — rumored by some to be Hillman himself in anima disguise. It contains the same mixture of provocative observation and insubstantial musing that characterize Hillman's work in general. None of the insubstantiality is Pozzo's fault; indeed, one could hardly ask for a more intelligent or informed questioner. Time and again she presses the elusive Hillman on such weak points as have been mentioned. But Hillman often dodges her or takes refuge in one of his metaphorical fugues. He meanders, engages in straw man critiques (e.g., of fundamentalist Christianity, which often stands for the whole), and offers generalizations about human life and culture that are vapid as often as they are perceptive. We may lay some of the blame for this on the interview format itself. Hillman shows himself aware of its constraints and observes that the interview, like the talk show and the panel discussion, is a modern contrivance that tends to render trivial that which is entrusted to it.

Nevertheless — and this too seems generally characteristic of his work — there are aspects here interesting enough to offset the dissatisfactions, and merit for the whole a cautious recommendation. To mention but three favorable impressions: first, *Inter Views* contains many pithy clarifications of the main ideas and attitudes of archetypal psychology's theory and practice, quite helpful for the newcomer as well as for us more plodding students. Second, it becomes clearer here than in any other work of which I'm aware that archetypal psychology has no pretensions whatever to being a science and that one errs, at least slightly, in criticizing it on that basis. In no less than fourteen places, Hillman indicates that he is not a scientist but an artist, not a psycho*logist* (for logos connotes rational systematization) but a *psychopoetiker*, a poet of the psyche. His work is part of an "aesthetic revolution," and is nourished by the hope that "we could rebuild psychology on an aesthetic basis." In a telling passage, Hillman discloses the link between aesthetics and healing: ". . . if we imagine ourselves engaged as artists in life, . . . then we would work with the daily mess in our lives as material for psychological creativity. And that is what therapy, as I try to do it, is all about: to get people to live their lives more from an artist fantasy of themselves [which] . . . accepts the mess, likes it, needs it."

Finally, there is Hillman in an anecdotal and confessional mode — an unexpected delight. He appears candid, self-effacing, witty, and utterly charming. I happily admit that my antipathy toward the man, the residue of intellectual dis-

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agreement, melted as I read. How can one help but like a writer with whom one has had difficulty when he admits that clarity is hard for him, that his style is uneven because he himself is "mixed, *meshugge*," and that he writes "about all sorts of things — like reflection — I don't necessarily *do* but might wish I could do or think I should do . . . [My] books are deceptive." Hillman even says that he once "began a little book called 'Why I Don't Read Hillman' . . . I made notes on all the dodges in my own thinking, all the loopholes and cover-ups — everything I couldn't bear in my own work."

For Hillman and his *Gemeinschaft* there is a large remainder of the bearable, and yes, of the worthwhile. After all is said and done, archetypal psychology strikes its own blow against the forces of repression and fosters psychological maturity through the differentiation of psychic life. It seeks to relieve us of the misery of the divided self in this unique way: not by unifying it but by teaching us how to live creatively within its natural (so the theory goes) fragmentation. And like a great religious tradition it offers, albeit idiosyncratically, the holy promise of liberation from the narrow prison of ego. But whether archetypal psychology will become a lasting force in human reflection or be remembered as an *avant-garde* vocation of belletrists seeking to bear, ennoble, and even sacralize ordinary human foibles — this remains to be seen.

Home-grown, full-bodied philosophy

A STROLL WITH WILLIAM JAMES

Jacques Barzun
Harper & Row, $19.95, 344 pp.

Michael Kellogg

"AMERICAN PHILOSOPHER," like "English wine," is close to a contradiction in terms. Despite the label, one expects little more than a watered-down import. All the more reason, then, to cherish those few products, like the philosophical writings of William James, that are both home-grown and full-bodied. Unfortunately, James, who died in 1910, is still known largely for his pioneering work in psychology. His philosophical writings, despite their range, subtlety, and concreteness, are little read, even by academics.

This neglect is due in part to the unfortunate label with which he saddled his thought. "Pragmatism" seems to imply in the crudest sense that what works is good and true. As Professor Barzun puts it, "James and Pragmatism have been branded as typically American, a mind and a doctrine to be expected from a nation of hucksters."

A deeper reason for the oversight, however, lies precisely in James's virtue of concreteness. He had an artist's love for the jumbled details of life and refused to take refuge in generalities that would "house and hide the chaos." As a consequence, he left no set of easily digestible doctrines upon which students and scholars alike could feast. In fact, his most persistent theme is the need to resist the tyranny of abstract thought.

Such a refrain may sound curious when intoned by a philosopher. Abstractions, senseless or not, are his stock in trade and, as the saying goes, "It's a poor carpenter who criticizes his tools." But James's point is simply that, as we move from one level of generality to a higher one, we must ensure that no details crucial to the point at hand are left behind.

Therapy aims at bringing a person back to an unreflected way of working, an instinctual way . . . It's a crazy thing because the whole procedure is insight and reflection and conversation in an armchair, yet the intention is unreflected responsiveness, just plain old working . . . without neurotic encumbrances.

—James Hillman
Inter Views

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Abstractions are not eschewed, merely refined and used with care. Hence, James's writings overflow with illustrations and qualifying examples. What he says of *The Principles of Psychology* could be applied to any of his works: "There is no closed system in this book." James is open to all that experience has to teach us.

This concreteness makes James a delight to read, but difficult to teach. Hence the neglect. Students read what professors assign. Professors assign what they can summarize and impart in a lecture. James is simply too untidy to be packaged so. (I fear my own experience is indicative. In six years of a steady and eclectic diet of philosophy courses at two universities, nothing by William James was ever assigned reading.)

Jacques Barzun's new book may go some way toward curbing this waste. Through half a century of reading and meditating upon James, his enthusiasm for the nuances and refinements is undiminished. More important, he has the gift of imparting that enthusiasm. Professor Barzun makes one burn to read William James.

The book is aptly titled. There is no hint of the scholar's forced march or the biographer's field trip. We are introduced to James as to an intimate friend of the author's, and the conversation is lively and wide-ranging. Too wide-ranging, perhaps. In keeping with the stroll motif, Barzun loves to wander off, applying Jamesian ideas and insights to contemporary issues. He decries the lack of concreteness in modern discourse and the prevalence of colorless psychobiographies. He discusses the death penalty, current research on the inheritance of acquired characteristics (a neo-Lamarckian doctrine to which James, Freud, and Nietzsche subscribed), and the deplorable state of our schools.

Professor Barzun has opinions on everything and expresses them regardless of any real or imagined connection with James. Yet the book merits the persistence it requires. Despite the digressions, Barzun manages to convey not only the richness of James's writings on psychology and philosophy, but also their unifying theme: man's creative role in fashioning truth.

James coined the phrase "stream of consciousness" to capture the flowing, variable nature of experience. He was reacting against British empiricism, which taught that the mind is merely a collection of ideas that passively mirror objects. James thought this static conception missed the crucial step wherein the mind imposes order on the flux of creating concepts. Objects are not merely presented to the mind for labeling. We, in effect, "create" the objects by settling upon a particular scheme of concepts. In other words, concepts are not predetermined by experience. Rather, they are creatively imposed on experience as "the mind's act of self-defense against universal drift and decay."

James's theory of truth is tied to this psychological insight. Truth resides in the creative interplay of autonomous concepts and given experience. Truth is what works in the sense that true propositions constitute a workable ordering of experience. They permit us to cope with the flux.

This neo-Kantian theory of truth informs James's thought on every topic, including ethics, aesthetics, and religion. With it, he continually avoids both the dominant idealism of his day (which treated concepts as themselves objects) and the logical positivism that followed him (treating concepts as strictly reducible to bundles of experiences). He also anticipates Wittgenstein's work on language and T.S. Kuhn's on the philosophy of science by half a century.

Professor Barzun's book is frustrating in many respects. It cries out for judicious trimming and a more orderly presentation. But it still conveys a profound understanding of all aspects of James's thought. And it stakes out, in convincing fashion, James's claim to greatness and originality as an American philosopher.

REVIEWERS

PATRICK JORDAN *was integrated into a baseball family. His preferred method of batting is to walk on four consecutive balls.*

GENE H. BELL-VILLADA *teaches Spanish at Williams College. He is the author of* Borges and His Fiction: A Guide to His Mind and Art.

PHILIP NOVAK *is assistant professor of philosophy and religious studies at Dominican College in San Rafael, California.*

MICHAEL KELLOGG, *a Harvard Law School Graduate with degrees in philosophy from Stanford and Oxford, is a clerk in Justice William H. Rehnquist's office in Washington, D.C.*

ARLENE SWIDLER *teaches religious studies at Villanova University. She is the author of* Woman in a Man's Church *(Paulist).*

Correspondence

(Continued from page 514)

some of the more fatuous technical assertions of some responsible nuclear critics. Such an approach is certainly justified given the widespread popular attention that has been afforded some of the outrageous claims.

It is possible to illustrate that the minutiae that Mr. Lanouette presents in rebuttal to a few of Mr. McCracken's assertions are in themselves incomplete or inaccurate. However, it would be more instructive to note the consensus of the scientific community, rather than the public debates on this topic. While there is a popular impression given by accounts such as Mr. Lanouette's that there remains substantial scientific disagreement over the merits and need for commercial nuclear energy, this is clearly not the case. A recent survey (see *Public Opinion*, August/September 1982) found that 89 percent of scientists, 98 percent of energy experts and 100 percent of nuclear experts felt that the nation should "proceed with nuclear energy" and that, when asked to assess the risks involved, 69 percent of scientists, 80 percent of energy experts and 98 percent of nuclear experts involved were willing to "locate nuclear plants in their cities."

Lastly, Mr. Lanouette writes that pro-nuclear books "are almost a genre these days." A cursory examination of any science/technology section in a bookstore reveals the opposite to be the case. Indeed, there is an unfortunate shortage of books such as *The War Against the Atom* in which the consensus of the scientific community is reflected and the

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"other side" of the story presented for public scrutiny.

MARK P. MILLS

The author replies

Although he doesn't say so, Mark Mills served as McCracken's technical adviser for this book. Yet for all his knowledge of the field, and of this book, Mills fails to offer a single example of what he calls my "misunderstanding of the technical facts" in the nuclear debate. Mills says the whole book is "accurate and fair," whereas I praised its first chapter as "lucid and generally accurate" but criticized the rest as biased and loose with the facts.

My review offered five detailed examples to demonstrate a few of McCracken's many selective inaccuracies. Yet Mills dismisses these as "minutiae" — without even trying to show how they might be wrong. Consider just one, McCracken's blooper on the breeder reactor. While praising U.S. breeder technology, he ignored federal studies that favored overwhelmingly the "pool" over the "loop" design for both safety and economy. And he ignored the fact that the two U.S. loop-type breeders had core-melt accidents while the one pool-type didn't, and is in its nineteenth year of operation. If such fundamental details are "minutiae," then I wonder what Mills considers significant facts.

Rather than address the many examples in my review, Mills presents "a recent poll," published last year but actually conducted in mid-1980, before the Washington Public Power Supply System's nuclear-plant bond default, the emergency planning fiascos at the Shoreham and Indiana Point plants, and the failure of automatic shut-down equipment at the Salem reactor. And he misunderstands that the genre I identified is not pro-nuclear books but those in which an apparently rational and dispassionate scholar defies conventional wisdom on a current controversy.

Unfortunately, in his haste to praise and defend a book that presents the "other side" of the nuclear debate, Mills betrays his own attachments — to McCracken and the pro-nuclear vision he advocates.

WILLIAM J. LANOUETTE

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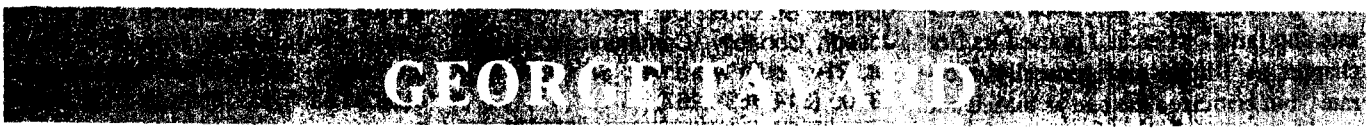

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